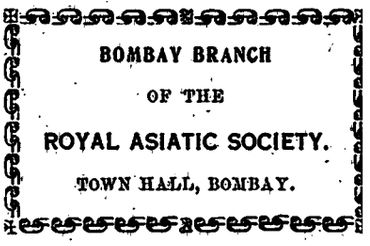
Administration Report

Assam

1915-16 & 1918-19



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REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION OF ASSAM

FOR

1915-16. to 1918-19.

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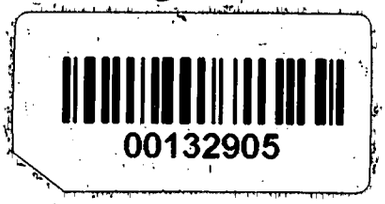

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PART I.

GENERAL SUMMARY.

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REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION OF ASSAM

FOR

1915-1916.

PART I.—GENERAL SUMMARY.

CHAPTER I.

PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY.

TOURS OF THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF ASSAM.

Tours.

1. The Chief Commissioner, accompanied by Lady Earle and party, left Shillong on Thursday, the 8th July 1915, and, on arrival at Gauhati, opened the Law College at that place. The next day the Chief Commissioner left by the *Brahmakund* for Tezpur, which was reached on the afternoon of the 10th idem. During the stay at Tezpur all local institutions were inspected, while several deputations were received.

The *Brahmakund* left Tezpur on the 15th July for Dibrugarh, that place being reached on the afternoon of the 18th idem. Six days were spent here, including a visit to Greenwood, the residence of the Hon'ble Mr. Playfair and Mrs. Playfair. All local institutions were inspected, while several enquiries were made as regards recent flood damage.

Leaving Dibrugarh on Sunday, the 25th July, Goalpara was reached by the evening of the 27th idem. Here the chief matter discussed was the question of introducing certain sections of the Bengal Tenancy Act as regards a common manager, there being several estates in the Goalpara subdivision where the provisions of the sections referred to might be of material use as regards rendering the management of such estates more efficient.

On the morning of the 29th July, the Chief Commissioner and party left Goalpara for Jogighopa, where he paid a visit to the Rani of Bijni.

On the morning of the 30th idem, the Chief Commissioner's party left for Dhubri, touching at Bogribari on the way. Dhubri was reached in the afternoon of the same day. Here three days were spent in inspecting the local institutions and in receiving deputations.

On Tuesday, the 3rd August, the Chief Commissioner and party left for the Surma Valley, *vid* Goalundo and Narainganj, on board the *Brahmakund*.

Sunamganj was reached on Saturday, the 7th August, and one complete day was spent there. The *Brahmakund* left for Sylhet on the 9th idem, which was reached on the same evening. Here four days were spent, one of the chief subjects for discussion being the requirements for the relief of distress caused by the recent floods in that district.

Sylhet was left on the morning of the 14th August, and Karimganj was reached on the evening of the same day. Here again the question of the relief of distress was the principal topic discussed.

The *Brahmakund* left Karimganj on the 17th August, and reached Silchar the same evening. Here three days were spent, and during the course of this visit the Chief Commissioner took the opportunity of thanking the students of the Government High School for the assistance which they had rendered in connection with the recent floods.

Leaving Silchar on the 21st August, the Chief Commissioner returned to Shillong, *viâ* Bhairab Bazar and Teestamukh Ghat, Shillong being reached on the evening of the 25th August.

The Chief Commissioner commenced his second tour on the 19th November 1915. On arrival at Gauhati, the Chief Commissioner inspected a batch of Military Police volunteers who were on the eve of departure for the front. After the inspection, the men were addressed by the Chief Commissioner and by one or two leading gentlemen of the town of Gauhati. Leaving Gauhati the same evening, Saikwa Ghat was reached the next evening, the 20th November 1915. The next few days were spent up the Noa Dehing river, towards the Dapha Bum, which a party has recently visited with the object of ascertaining whether oil in paying quantities will be obtainable.

Returning to Saikwa Ghat on the 9th December, Nowgong was reached on the 10th idem. Here three days were spent, one of the chief subjects of discussion during the visit being the alignment of the Chaparmukh-Silghat Railway.

Nowgong was left on the 14th December, and the next few days were spent at Gauhati. On the afternoon of the 23rd December, the Chief Commissioner and party proceeded to Koimari in the district of Kamrup, where the Christmas holidays were spent.

On the 31st December, the Chief Commissioner and party left Koimari for Calcutta, where they were the guests of His Excellency the Governor of Bengal for two days. The Chief Commissioner returned to Shillong on the 4th January 1916.

The Chief Commissioner's third tour of the year commenced on the 14th January 1916. The town of Jowai was reached on the 15th idem, while on the 16th the party left Jowai and, travelling *viâ* Jarain and Borghat, reached Jaintiapur on the 19th idem. Here a day was spent, after which the journey was resumed and Sylhet was reached on the 22nd idem. Leaving Sylhet on the 25th January, the Chief Commissioner and party proceeded to Srimangal, visiting Prithimpasha on the way. From Srimangal, Maulvi Bazar was visited, while "F" and "G" troops, Surma Valley Light Horse, were inspected at Kalighat.

Srimangal was left on the 29th January, and Habiganj reached the same day. Here a halt was made for four days, the chief subject for discussion there being questions connected with the relief of the distress caused by the floods of June and July 1915.

Silchar was reached on the 3rd February 1916, the chief object of the visit being the Surma Valley Light Horse Annual Camp of Exercise, and the opening by Lady Earle of the Bazar organised by the ladies of the Surma Valley Light Horse in aid of war funds.

Leaving Silchar on the 9th February, the Chief Commissioner proceeded through the hills to Imphal, which was reached on the 25th February. On the 26th February 1916, His Highness the Raja of Manipur made a state call on the Chief Commissioner at the Residency, which was returned the same day by the Chief Commissioner at the Durbar Hall. In reply to a speech made by His Highness at the latter place, the Chief Commissioner thanked the Raja for all that he had done in connection with the war and for his generous gifts to the various war funds. On the 28th February 1916, the Chief Commissioner laid the foundation stone of a new residential high school at Langthabal, the primary object of which is the training of Manipuris with a view to their employment in various capacities in connection with the State.

Imphal was left on the 29th February, and Kohima reached on the 1st March. Leaving Kohima on the 3rd March, Shillong was reached on the 4th idem.

CHANGES IN THE ADMINISTRATION.

Changes in the Administration.

2. No administrative changes of importance were introduced during the year. The Hon'ble Sir Archdale Earle, K.C.I.E., held charge of the Administration throughout the year.

EFFECTS OF THE WAR ON THE ADMINISTRATION.

Effects of the war on the Administration.

3. It was stated in last year's report that there was an absence of foolish rumours with reference to the war and a general prevalence of sober opinions, and in this respect the attitude of the people remained unchanged throughout the year. It would hardly be too much to say that the war has almost been accepted as part of the natural order of things, though peace is desired not only from a genuine feeling of loyalty to the Crown, but from a desire for a reversion to the lower prices of pre-war times. There was nothing in the shape of panic and excitement, and the only indication of the abnormal conditions of the time was the enforcement of rigid economy in the administration, the collection of subscriptions for various war funds, the high prices of imported articles, and the appointment of a large number of Government servants and private persons to the Indian Army Reserve of Officers. Up to October 1916, 58 officials and 187 non-officials had either joined this corps or the regular army, while 2,386 Officers, Non-commissioned officers and men of the Military Police Battalions had gone on service. The province as a whole responded liberally to the charitable calls which were made upon it, and His Highness the Raja of Manipur was conspicuous in his offers of help in men and money. He gave four Ambulance Motor Cars and an Aeroplane, lent 100 men of the State Military Police to take the place of members of the Assam Battalions who had joined the army, and, after the close of the year, arranged for the recruitment of a double company of Manipuris who would undertake service across the seas, proposing, if allowed, to accompany them in person.

RELATIONS WITH TRIBUTARY STATES AND FRONTIER AFFAIRS.

Manipur.

4. The year was politically uneventful and such small incidents as occurred upon the frontier were reported to the Government of Burma, who now exercise some measure of control in the Somra tract.

In spite of the embargo on the export of rice, the price of rice rose to an abnormal height. Public health was, however, good. The revenue of the State, excluding the "water rate," rose from Rs. 6,37,742 to Rs. 6,40,225; gross expenditure also rose from Rs. 6,19,900 to Rs. 6,47,904.

Frontier tribes.

5. During the year no operations beyond the frontier were undertaken. The Political Officers continued to extend their influence over the tribes under their control and the behaviour of the tribes throughout the frontier was generally satisfactory.

CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

Condition of the people.

6. Immense damage was done by the floods in the Surma Valley and large sums had to be spent on gratuitous relief and agricultural loans, more particularly in the district of Sylhet. In the Assam Valley the year was unfavourable to cultivators owing to bad weather and the damage done to corps by floods and cattle-disease, but there was nothing in the shape of general distress. The prices of food-grains were high throughout the year in the Assam Valley.

CHAPTER II.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAND.

REALISATION OF THE REVENUE.

Realisation of the revenue.

7. There was an increase of 136 square miles in the total settled area and of Rs. 1,40,567 in the revenue demand. The total demand on account of miscellaneous land revenue rose from Rs. 6,67,751 to Rs. 7,20,092, of which 96·23 per cent. was collected. The total amount advanced under the Agriculturists' Loans Act was Rs. 21,42,212, of which nearly 20½ lakhs were distributed in the Surma Valley in consequence of the disastrous floods of 1915. The number of processes issued increased by 12,695 and the fees realised by Rs. 12,272. Of the total of 556 partition cases for disposal, 255 cases were disposed of during the year.

SURVEYS AND SETTLEMENTS.

Survey.

8. The separation of the Assam Survey Department from that of Bengal was carried out during the year and the Assam surveys were entrusted to the Superintendent, Eastern Circle, Survey of India, as an experimental measure.

The work of the Traverse Party consisted mainly in the traverse surveys of extension villages and in the relaying of *thak* and other boundaries. The Shillong Drawing Office printed 50,155 copies of maps for Assam.

Settlement.

9. The re-settlement operations in the district of Cachar, the Jaintia parganas of Sylhet and the experimental operations in the permanently-settled tract in Sylhet were in progress during the year.

In Cachar the field programme of record attestation was completed without any difficulty, but the programme of office work was not finished owing to unavoidable delay in the preparation of assessment statistics. The fairing out of the records of the Katigora, Silchar and Hailakandi groups was started towards the close of the year.

Assessment proposals for the Katigora and Hailakandi groups were submitted to the Local Administration for necessary sanction. Revenue attestation was not done in any of the groups as the rates proposed by the Settlement Officer could not be finally sanctioned pending disposal of objections to them.

In Jaintia the programme for the year was the attestation of the record for the whole area, and the preparation of assessment statements and group reports. The programme of field work was completed with some difficulty, especially in Kanairghat where the work could not be started till late and had to be extended till June 1916.

In that part of the permanently-settled tract in Sylhet which has been taken up experimentally for survey and settlement work the attestation of the whole area was completed during the year. This includes one sheet in which survey was only completed last year and preliminary record writing and recess work were done during this year. Besides the above, the survey, preliminary record writing and attestation of a small area (about 420 acres) of *Ilam* land released by the Deputy Commissioner were also completed. Final recess work was begun in May and is now well in hand and the final copying of the record will shortly be begun. The Settlement Officer expects to bring the operations practically to a close by the end of the current financial year.

Besides the above regular operations, work in connection with the revision of classification in areas taken up after re-settlement in the districts of Sibsagar and Kamrup was in progress and is now well advanced.

LAND RECORDS.

Land Records.

10. There was no change in the constitution of the Land Records staff. The accepted policy of substituting resident for non-resident recorders was always kept in view.

During the year only one third-grade mandal was added to the Land Records staff of the district of Nowgong.

SETTLEMENT FOR SPECIAL CULTIVATION (WASTE LANDS).

Settlement for special cultivation.

11. The total area settled for special cultivation increased by 13,999 acres and the revenue demand assessed thereon by Rs. 18,348.

WARDS' ESTATES.

Wards' Estates.

12. Two estates were released from management during the year. A considerable reduction was effected in the debts of one estate. Collections of rents were not satisfactory as tenants suffered from the effects of floods. The cost of management fell from 19·18 to 16·80 per cent. of the current demand.

REVENUE AND RENT-PAYING CLASSES.

Bengal Tenancy Act.

13. Sections 93 to 100 of the Bengal Tenancy Act were introduced in the permanently-settled areas of the district of Goalpara.

Relations between landlords and tenants.

14. The relations between landlords and tenants in Goalpara were not satisfactory. The introduction of a special form of rent receipt in Sylhet and Goalpara was under consideration.

CHAPTER III.

PROTECTION.

LEGISLATION.

Legislation.

15. The provisions of parts of the Bengal Municipal Act, III of 1884, were extended to certain Municipalities, and Act XIII of 1880, with Bengal Act V of 1880, were extended to others.

Certain sections of the Bengal Tenancy Act, VIII of 1885, were extended to the estates borne on the revenue roll of certain parganas in the district of Sylhet.

POLICE.

Military Police.

16. The principal work on which the Military Police were engaged during the year was the provision of recruits for the Army, and by the end of September 1916 no less than 2,347 officers, non-commissioned officers and men had joined the regular forces. To facilitate this work, permission was obtained to recruit up to a strength of 1,000 men for each battalion, and the Chief Commissioner was authorised to suspend the rule under which military officers serving with the Military Police are permitted to rejoin their own regiments after a certain term. No expeditions or promenades of any importance were undertaken during the year. General E. S. May, Commanding, 8th (Lucknow) Division, inspected the Naga Hills, the Darrang, and the Lakhimpur Battalions, and submitted very favourable reports on their character and work.

Civil Police.

17. There were no changes during the year in the cadre of superior officers, but the subordinate police force was increased by 26 officers and men. The system of drilling men at the thanas twice a week was continued in almost all districts with good results. The drill, discipline and musketry of the Armed Branch were satisfactory. Ninety-nine criminal charges were brought against the police; of the 57 cases which were found to be true, 32 ended in conviction, but of these 30 were for minor offences only.

Crime.

18. There was a decrease of 611 cases of cognizable crime for disposal. Of the cases investigated by the police 33·1 per cent. were brought to trial, and of these 78·9 per cent. ended in conviction. A wandering gang of thieves, known as Karwal Nats, was successfully prosecuted in the Kamrup district, and certain gangs of Gains, Sandars and Karwal Nats were proclaimed as criminal tribes under the Criminal Tribes Act. There was a satisfactory decrease in the number of true cases of dacoity from 17 to 7.

Finance.

19. The total net cost of the Department during the year was Rs. 22,89,978 as against Rs. 23,32,110 in 1914.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE.

Plains Districts.

20. The number of offences reported decreased from 44,819 to 41,951 and the number of cases brought to trial from 19,746 to 19,416; the percentage of convictions rose from 41·2 to 42·2.

In Sessions Courts 307 persons were convicted, 160 discharged or acquitted and the cases of 8 were referred for the orders of the High Court.

The sentences of Subordinate Courts were confirmed on appeal in 84 per cent. of the cases before the High Court, in 65 per cent. of the cases before the Sessions Courts, and in 61 per cent. of the cases before District Magistrates. The charges incurred in the Criminal Courts amounted to Rs. 3,94,104 and the receipts to Rs. 2,38,838.

Hill Districts and Frontier Tracts.

In hill districts and frontier tracts 1,208 persons were convicted in 1,077 cases involving 1,692 persons.

JAILS.

Jails.

21. The daily average population rose from 2,021·37 to 2,140·55, the highest figure hitherto recorded in this province. Strenuous efforts were made to improve the health of the prisoners with the satisfactory result that the hospital admission rate

per mille decreased to 960·50 from 1,132·90 and the death-rate per mille to 21·49 in 1915 from 43·53 in 1914. The death-rate of 1915 was the lowest on record. To avoid overcrowding additional temporary accommodation was provided where necessary, but projects which have been prepared for increasing the permanent accommodation have necessarily been postponed for want of funds. The net cost per head of average strength showed a further rise of Rs. 18-15-0 owing to increased expenditure on sanitation and to improvements in hospital diet.

CIVIL JUSTICE.

Plains Districts.

22. The number of civil suits disposed of considerably exceeded the number instituted, for only 41,118 original suits were instituted, and of 54,291 cases on the files 43,880 were disposed of. The corresponding figures for the preceding year were 40,826, 52,853 and 40,652, respectively. Of 28,645 applications received for execution of decrees 22,884 were disposed of and a total sum of Rs. 5,86,030 was realized. In 70·3 per cent. of the execution cases proceedings were infructuous. In the case of appeals to Courts other than the High Court, the orders of the Lower Court were upheld in 69 per cent. of the cases and reversed in 18 per cent. The receipts of the Courts amounted to Rs. 7,13,066 and the charges to Rs. 3,16,761.

Hill Districts and Frontier Tracts.

In hill districts and frontier tracts 1,562 suits and 39 appeals were decided. Suits to the value of Rs. 1,95,244 were instituted.

REGISTRATION.

Registration.

23. Two temporary whole-time sub-registry offices, one in the Assam Valley and one in the Surma Valley, were made permanent and one temporary office in the Assam Valley was closed during the year. The number of documents registered rose from 88,109 to 90,089. The receipts amounted to Rs. 1,11,035 against Rs. 1,09,550 and the expenditure to Rs. 64,136 against Rs. 62,160 in the previous year.

One Muhammadan Marriage registry office was opened at Srimangal in the district of Sylhet and the permanent retention of the office at Katlicherra in the district of Cachar was sanctioned during the year. The number of ceremonies registered by Muhammadan Marriage Registrars decreased by 492.

Two new companies limited by shares were registered. Three companies went into voluntary liquidation, one was on its way to the same, one was struck off the register and two were dealt with as defunct. At the close of the year 60 companies limited by shares were at work with an aggregate paid-up capital of Rs. 21,25,689.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS.

Municipalities.

24. The total income decreased owing to a reduction in the grants for special purposes which the Government was able to make, while the total expenditure increased. The incidence of taxation per head of population rose from Rs. 1-12-8 to Rs. 2-0-9. The Mangaldai and North Lakhimpur unions which were constituted during 1915-16 came into active existence from the beginning of the current financial year. Since the close of the year a union has been constituted at Doom Dooma in the Sadr subdivision of the Lakhimpur district. The financial position of the municipalities on the whole was sound. The conservancy arrangements of the Sylhet and Dibrugarh municipalities were substantially improved with the aid of Government grants. The services of the ten Sanitary Inspectors supplied to municipalities at Government expense proved of much value in securing more efficient administration of the conservancy system, but the conservancy arrangements of most towns are still very defective and call for largely increased expenditure. The Jorhat water-works were completed during the year, and progress is being made with the construction of the Silchar, Sylhet and Dhubri water-works, towards which the Local Administration has made considerable grants. Insufficient attention was paid to the account rules, and cases of embezzlement occurred at Silchar, Sylhet, Dibrugarh and Sunamganj.

Local Boards.

25. The nineteen Local Boards in the province were reconstituted under the newly passed Assam Local Self-Government Act on the 1st January 1916, and the Boards thus attained a legal status with increased powers and responsibilities.

Owing to an unavoidable reduction in Government contributions, the Boards income decreased by more than six lakhs, and they had consequently to exercise the

strictest economy in all departments of their activity. Expenditure decreased somewhat under the heads "Education" and "Medical," and very considerably, owing to the cessation of special Government contributions for communications, under "Civil Works."

The expenditure on education fell by about Rs. 35,000, but its percentage on the total income of the Boards rose from 28·76 to 35·85. Less money was spent on buildings and equipment than in the previous year, but in all other directions progress was maintained.

The expenditure on medical charity and sanitation, exclusive of water-supply, fell by about Rs. 10,000; but that on water-supply rose by more than Rs. 46,000. This increase of expenditure on water-supply was rendered possible by earmarked Government grants which were given under a five years' water-supply scheme sanctioned in 1914-15.

Floods damaged roads and bridges to a considerable extent, and Boards were compelled to devote more funds to repair works than in the previous year. Expenditure on original communication works had, consequently, to be very considerably cut down.

For the purpose of organising a number of Village Authorities, as an experimental measure, a few circles were selected in each Valley in 1914-15 and placed under experienced Sub-Deputy Collectors. In two of these circles Village Authorities have been formally constituted under the Act and in two others they are expected to be so constituted shortly. Some of the Village Authorities formed have done good work during the year, and, on the whole, the scheme has made a promising beginning.

MILITARY (VOLUNTEERING).

Military (volunteering).

26. The Volunteer Corps of the province maintained their strength and efficiency. At the close of the year the combined strength of the Assam Valley Light Horse and the Surma Valley Light Horse stood at 89 officers and 1,295 rank and file.

CHAPTER IV.

PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE.

Agriculture and Horticulture.

27. Mr. McKay was appointed as Second Deputy Director of Agriculture on the retirement of Rai Bhupal Chandra Basu Bahadur. Mr. Meggit continued to act in place of Mr. Birt, who was still on military duty. The subordinate staff consisted of 27 officers as against 24 in the preceding year. Sugarcane experiments were carried out at the Jorhat Farm and the cultivation of cane with steam tackle for the manufacture of refined sugar was in progress at the Kamrup Sugarcane Farm at Khagrabari. At the Karimganj Farm the experiments in the line breeding of rice were continued. Nearly 600 maunds of potatoes were sold as seed at the Shillong Farm.

At the Shillong Fruit Station 17½ acres have been planted out with various kinds of fruit trees and excellent fruit was obtained from the older trees.

The demonstration work undertaken dealt for the most part with the value of manures, the qualities of different varieties of sugarcane and the cultivation of potatoes.

Lack of funds prevented the question of cattle-breeding being taken up on a large scale.

Six leaflets and bulletins were issued during the year.

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES.

Co-operative societies.

28. The number of societies rose from 301 to 315, the number of members from 16,022 to 17,981 and the working capital from Rs. 8,07,515 to Rs. 8,96,237. The reserve funds of central banks increased from Rs. 7,348 to Rs. 14,019 and those of

agricultural societies from Rs. 49,529 to Rs. 63,255. There was an apparent decrease in the reserve funds of non-agricultural societies from Rs. 15,706 to Rs. 14,496 owing to the transfer of one society from the class of non-agricultural societies to that of central banks. The existing societies are gaining in popularity and are doing useful work, but as financial reasons have prevented effect being given to the orders sanctioning the appointment of a new officer as Registrar of Co-operative Societies and Director of Industries, no considerable expansion of the movement has been found possible.

WEATHER AND CROPS.

Weather and Crops.

29. The rainfall was abnormal, especially in the Surma Valley and the adjoining hills, and, as a result there were floods of exceptional severity in Cachar and Sylhet. In the latter district the rice crop was destroyed over large areas and the early cessation of the rains, coupled with a drought in the cold weather, prevented the raiyats from repairing the very serious losses caused by the flood. Taking the province as a whole the outturns of rice, oilseeds, sugarcane and jute were all considerably below the normal, and large sums of money had to be distributed as agricultural loans in Sylhet.

FORESTS.

Forests.

30. The total area of reserved forests at the close of the year was 4,907 square miles, an increase of 379 square miles, and 449 square miles were undergoing settlement. In the North-East Frontier Tracts 50 square miles were protected under executive orders. No new working plans were framed. The prescriptions of the existing working plans were followed as far as possible. Five hundred and twenty-one square miles of reserved forests in Sibsagar were surveyed with interior details. The Goalpara tramway worked at a profit and the financial position of the Department was satisfactory as the year ended with a surplus of Rs. 2,66,434. Two hundred and seventy-nine elephants were captured in the Goalpara-Bhutan mahals which were leased for hunting. A special enquiry was made into the conditions of the grazing industry in the Assam Valley, and proposals formulated for the better control of graziers. Satisfactory results were obtained from the samples of grasses which were sent to the Titaghur Paper Mills and the possibility of using these grasses for the production of paper pulp engaged attention.

MANUFACTURES AND MINES.

Tea.

31. Although there was unusually heavy rainfall in three districts, the outturn of tea rose by about 18 per cent. to 2,45,385,920 lbs. There was no manufacture of green tea. Exports increased considerably, and prices in London and Calcutta were high.

Mines.

32. No new mining leases were issued, but one prospecting license was granted and four licenses were renewed during the year. The output of coal increased, while that of oil decreased. The royalty realised increased from Rs. 62,681 to Rs. 62,714.

FACTORIES.

Factories.

33. At the close of the year there were 15 factories in the province employing 2,821 workers. Twelve of the factories were inspected and no adverse comments were made on them. Two accidents were reported during the year.

TRADE.

Rail and River-borne trade.

34. Climatic conditions were unfavourable to cultivation. Though imports and exports declined in quantity from 1,04,41,830½ and 1,32,16,374 maunds in 1914-15 to 1,03,01,848 and 1,06,94,093$\frac{3}{4}_0$ maunds, their value increased from Rs. 8,65,63,037 and Rs. 14,80,17,143 to Rs. 9,82,39,372 and Rs. 16,01,78,473, respectively. The value of the total trade between Assam and other provinces rose from Rs. 23,45,80,180 to Rs. 25,84,17,845.

Frontier trade.

35. The value of Frontier Trade registered was Rs. 22,80,387. There was a contraction of trade with all the hill tribes except the Akas and Daflas. There was a further decline in the export of opium.

PUBLIC WORKS.

36. The total expenditure on Provincial Civil Works in charge of the Public Works Department amounted to Rs. 35,70,301. Of this a sum of Rs. 7,20,582 was spent on original works in connection with provincial buildings and Rs. 2,19,152 on repairs. The expenditure on original works Communications was Rs. 4,89,273, while a sum of Rs. 12,66,406 was spent on the maintenance of the existing provincial communications. Public Works.

CHAPTER V.

REVENUE AND FINANCE.

37. Gross receipts rose from Rs. 1,72,44,772 in the previous year to Rs. 1,78,63,331, while the gross expenditure fell from Rs. 1,71,53,295 to Rs. 1,56,66,381. Gross revenue.

38. The provincial account opened with a balance of Rs. 29,48,878 which included Imperial assignments for various purposes aggregating Rs. 20,28,000. Receipts amounted to Rs. 1,42,88,971 and expenditure to Rs. 1,52,40,071. Further Imperial assignments of Rs. 4,48,000 were received during the year and the provincial account closed with a balance of Rs. 19,97,778. Provincial finance.

39. The only salt warehouse in the province was at Ajmiriganj. Imports decreased by 17,000 maunds, clearances by 10,663 maunds, and the net revenue by Rs. 21,130. The retail price of salt increased from Rs. 3 to Rs. 3-4-0. Salt.

40. The revenue demand under all heads amounted to Rs. 53,94,136 against Rs. 53,79,703 in the previous year, the net increase being ·2 per cent. against 2·4 per cent. in the year 1914-15. During the year under report the minimum and maximum retail prices of 60 U. P. country spirit were raised in all the plains districts. A new distillery contract, whereby the cost paid by the vendors to the contractor for spirit was reduced from Re. 1-13-0 to Re. 1-9-0 per L. P. gallon, came into force at the beginning of the year. The rate of duty on country spirit was, however, raised from Rs. 3-2-0 to Rs. 3-12-0 per gallon, the net result being a rise by Re. 0-6-0 per gallon in the total cost of spirit to the vendor. Minimum retail prices were fixed for *ganja* and opium and the hours of sales at all excise shops were curtailed by two hours. These important measures combined with natural calamities and depression of trade brought about a fall in the consumption of *ganja* by 6·63 per cent., of opium by 4·4 per cent. and of country spirit by 23·1 per cent. Since the close of the year the treasury price of opium has been raised by Rs. 3 throughout the province. Excise.

41. Receipts under the Stamp and Court-fees Acts fell from Rs. 14,10,511 to Rs. 14,03,075. There was an increase of Rs. 3,908 in the revenue derived from the sale of judicial stamps, but this was more than counterbalanced by a decrease of Rs. 11,344 in the revenue derived from non-judicial stamps, the result being a net decrease of Rs. 7,436. Unfavourable agricultural conditions in the Surma Valley were responsible for the decline. Stamps.

42. The total income-tax receipts rose by ·52 per cent. and amounted to Rs. 4,62,793. Income-tax.

43. The total ordinary land revenue demand rose from Rs. 75,74,477 to Rs. 78,77,499 and the miscellaneous land revenue from Rs. 6,67,751 to Rs. 7,20,092. 91·90 per cent. of the ordinary land revenue demand and 96·23 per cent. of the miscellaneous land revenue demand were collected. Land Revenue.

44. The current demand on account of local rates amounted to Rs. 8,05,345, of which 83·92 per cent. was collected. Remissions amounted to Rs. 14 only. Local Rates.

CHAPTER VI.

VITAL STATISTICS.

45. The year was not a healthy one. Heavy floods in the Surma Valley and in parts of the Assam Valley caused climatic conditions unfavourable to health and were the chief cause of the rise in the death-rate per mille from 24·66 in 1914 to Vital statistics.

30·86 in 1915. The mortality from all the principal diseases was above that of the preceding ten years. The provincial birth-rate in 1915 was 33·60 per mille, which is higher than the rate for 1914 and also than the average rate of the previous quinquennium.

IMMIGRATION AND LABOUR INSPECTION.

Immigration.

46. The principal events of the year were the formation of the Assam Labour Board, the abolition of the system of recruitment by contractors with effect from the 1st July 1915, and the withdrawal of the labour districts provisions of Act VI of 1901 with effect from the same date.

The number of immigrants was considerably higher than in any of the preceding four years. The number of deaths which occurred among them in transit was 114.

The birth-rate was lower than that of the previous year, while the death-rate was higher. Only one complaint of ill-treatment was brought by coolies against their employers, and cases of unlawful assembly or rioting and assault instituted by managers against coolies show a satisfactory decrease from 15 to 5. The relations between the planters and the neighbouring villagers was, as usual, satisfactory.

MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS.

Charitable dispensaries.

47. During the year 1,619,294 patients were treated at 206 dispensaries. Eleven new dispensaries were opened, but 9 had to be closed owing to the shortage of Sub-Assistant Surgeons, many of whom were deputed to military duty. The percentage of the population obtaining medical relief in State, Local Fund and Private-aided dispensaries was 21·53.

Lunatic Asylum.

48. At the close of the year there were 115 criminal and 237 non-criminal lunatics in the Tezpur Asylum. The death-rate per cent. on the average strength was 8·92, which is comparatively low for institutions of this nature.

SANITATION.

Sanitation.

49. The aggregate expenditure of urban local bodies on sanitation amounted to Rs. 2,69,071. Satisfactory progress was made on the various schemes for the improvement of water-supply both in urban and rural areas and drainage in urban areas.

The anti-kala-azar operations were continued and five travelling dispensaries were at work. The steady decrease in the virulence of this disease and in the area of its activity is most satisfactory.

VACCINATION.

Vaccination.

50. The number of operations performed in the province was 312,398 against 320,016 in the previous year. The decrease is attributed to greater strictness in supervision and to increased accuracy in the returns. An increase was reported in two districts, and a decrease in four, while in the remaining districts there was practically no change as compared with the records of work of the previous year. The rate of mortality from small-pox increased from ·37 to ·58 per mille.

CHAPTER VII.

INSTRUCTION.

Education.

*51. Public institutions decreased in number, but a small gain in scholars was recorded, while private institutions advanced both in number and strength. The percentage of male pupils to the male population of a school-going age rose from 39·67 to 40·21 and that of female pupils from 5·66 to 5·81. The expenditure on education rose from Rs. 26,54,237 to Rs. 26,87,559.

The affiliation of both the Colleges remained the same as in the preceding year. A proposal to raise the Murarichand College to the Degree standard, however, matured towards the close of the year. Students on the rolls of Colleges increased from 551 to 593.

There was a falling off in the enrolment both in High and Middle English schools, which is attributable mainly to the levy of fees at higher rates and to the popularity of Middle Vernacular schools.

Progress was maintained in Muhammadan education.

A secondary school for European and Anglo-Indian boys, under the title of St. Edmund's College, was opened in Shillong towards the close of the year.

Female education maintained its steady progress.

LITERATURE AND THE PRESS.

52. Ninety publications were received and catalogued against 57 in the previous year. Fourteen newspapers and ten periodicals were published during the year. Literature and the Press.

CHAPTER VIII.

ARCHÆOLOGY.

53. Special repairs were undertaken by the Public Works Department to the Durgadole and Sibdole temples on the bank of Sibsagar tank, and to the Sibdole temple at Gaurisagar. Archæology.

Two inscribed rocks known as "Sakreswar" and "Bishwanath Sivalinga" at Bishwanath in the district of Darrang were declared protected monuments under Act VII of 1904 during the year.

CHAPTER IX.

MISCELLANEOUS.

STATIONERY.

54. Savings were effected by almost all Departments. In view of the present situation, strict economy is being exercised in the use of paper and stationery generally. Stationery.

PRINTING.

55. There was an increase in cash receipts, and in expenditure. The amount paid to workmen again exceeded the value of their outturn. Printing.

VETERINARY.

56. Owing to the dearth of qualified candidates the staff was below sanctioned strength. There were, however, 15 students under training and the increase of pay recently sanctioned will make the service more popular. Veterinary.

Rinderpest was very virulent during the year and was responsible for nearly half the deaths from contagious diseases, which reached a total of 43,536 as compared with 36,280 in the previous year. Part of the increase was, however, probably due to better reporting. Much inoculation work was done with good results, but there was a decrease in the number of animals treated in the villages for contagious and non-contagious diseases by itinerant assistants, due to the special attention paid to inoculation work and to the fact that there were not so many men available for duty as in the previous year. The scheme for the improvement of live stock by the introduction of selected bulls from Manipur was postponed as funds were not available.

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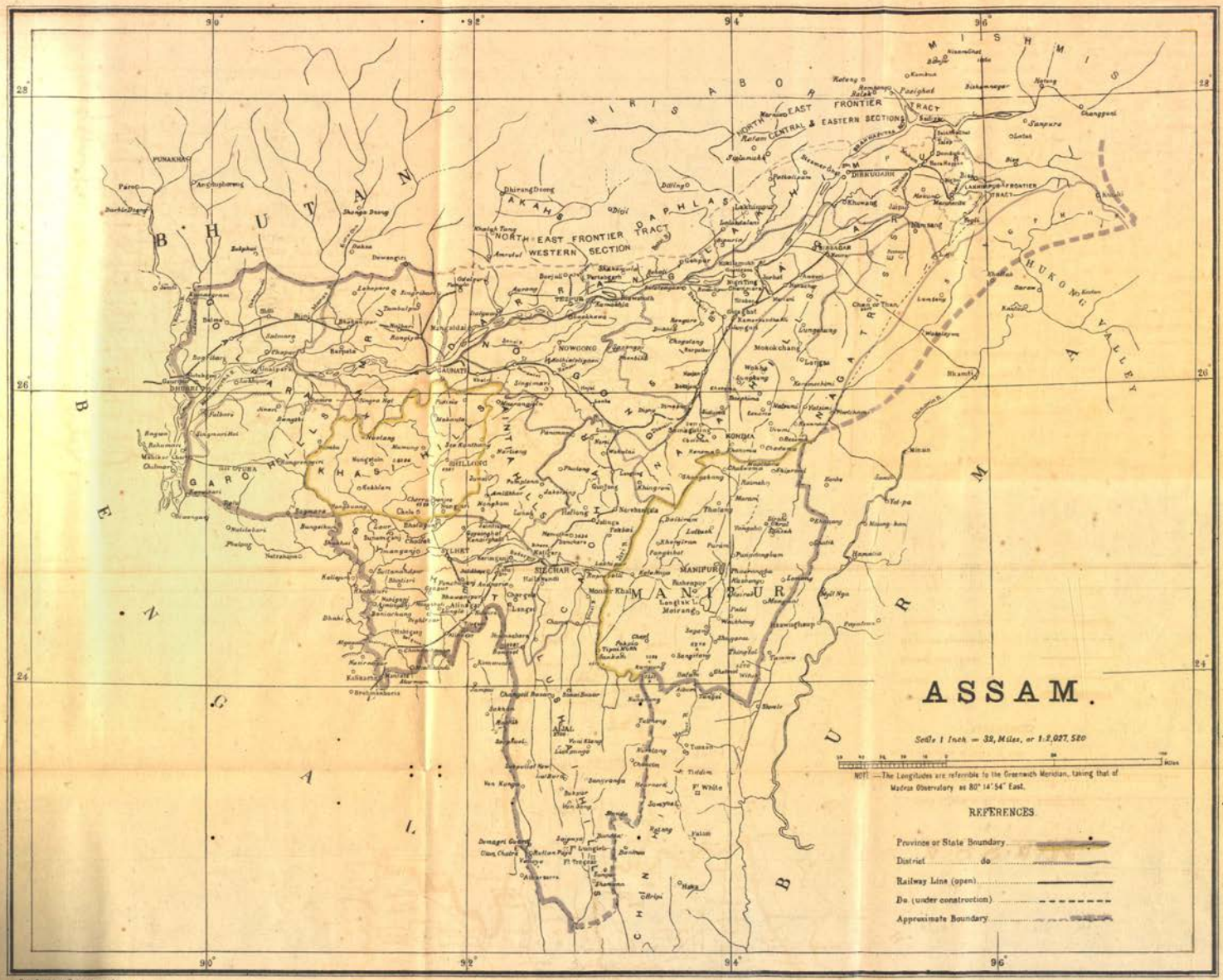

O. G. Shillong R. S. No. 2223 of 1916

REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION OF ASSAM

FOR THE YEAR

1915-1916.

PART II.—Report.

CHAPTER I.

PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY.

FOR—

SECTION 1.—PHYSICAL FEATURES OF THE COUNTRY, AREA, CLIMATE AND CHIEF STAPLES.

SECTION 2.—HISTORICAL SUMMARY.

SECTION 3.—FORM OF ADMINISTRATION.

SECTION 4.—CHARACTER OF LAND TENURES, SYSTEM OF SURVEYS AND SETTLEMENTS.

SECTION 5.—CIVIL DIVISIONS OF BRITISH TERRITORY.

SECTION 6.—DETAILS OF THE LAST CENSUS, TRIBES AND LANGUAGES.

[*See* General Administration Report, 1911-1912, Part II, pages 1-75.]

SECTION 7.—CHANGES IN THE ADMINISTRATION.

Changes in the Administration.

1. No administrative changes of importance were introduced during the year. The Hon'ble Sir Archdale Earle, K.C.I.E., held charge of the Administration throughout the year.

EFFECTS OF THE WAR ON THE ADMINISTRATION.

Effects of the war on the Administration.

2. It was stated in last year's report that there was an absence of foolish rumours with reference to the war and a general prevalence of sober opinions, and in this respect the attitude of the people remained unchanged throughout the year. It would hardly be too much to say that the war has almost been accepted as part of the natural order of things, though peace is desired not only from a genuine feeling of loyalty to the Crown, but from a desire for a reversion to the lower prices of pre-war times. There was nothing in the shape of panic and excitement, and the only indication of the abnormal conditions of the time was the enforcement of rigid economy in the administration, the collection of subscriptions for various war funds, the high prices of imported articles and the appointment of a large number of Government servants and private persons to the Indian Army Reserve of Officers. Up to October 1916, 58 officials and 187 non-officials had either joined this corps or the regular army, while 2,386 officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the Military Police Battalions had gone on service. The province as a whole responded liberally to the charitable calls which were made upon it, and His Highness the Raja of Manipur was conspicuous in his offers of help in men and money. He gave four Ambulance

Motor Cars and an Aeroplane, lent 100 men of the State Military Police to take the place of members of the Assam Battalions who had joined the army, and, after the close of the year, arranged for the recruitment of a double company of Manipuris who would undertake service across the seas, proposing, if allowed, to accompany them in person.

SECTION 8.—Frontier Relations and Feudatory States.

[*See* General Administration Report for 1911-1912, Part II, pages 76-85.]

SECTION 9.—Relations with Tributary States and Frontier Tribes.

FEUDATORY STATES.

MANIPUR.

[Tribute :—Rupees 50,000. Population (1911) :—346,222. Average gross revenue for last five years :—Rs. 5,75,031. Military Police.—7 officers and 223 men. Products :—Rice, vegetables, sugarcane, tobacco, wax, tea-seed and other forest products, ponies, cattle. Manufactures :—Silk, cotton cloth, brass and other metal utensils, mustard oil, a few articles of ivory and jewellery, some leather work and coarse salt. Minerals :—Iron, limestone and copper.]

[Raja :—His Highness Raja Chura Chand Singh, aged 30 years, caste Kshatriya. His Highness has three daughters by his first wife Rani Ngangbom Dhanamanjuri Ibemacha ; two sons, aged 8 and 5 years, by his second wife Rani Chingakhom Syama Sakhi ; one daughter by his third wife Rani Ngangbom Preo Sakhi ; and one son, aged 2 years, by his fifth wife Rani Haobom Lilabati.]

General. 3. The year was uneventful as regards purely internal affairs. There was no disturbance among the Manipuris.

Hill tribes. 4. The conduct of the hill tribes was generally satisfactory, but those inhabiting the unadministered tract between Manipur and Burma gave some trouble. The Burma authorities, who have assumed some measure of control over the southern and eastern portions of the unadministered tract, in view of its probable ultimate annexation by Burma, took steps to obtain redress for certain minor breaches of the peace which occurred on Manipur territory.

Administration of the land revenue. 5. During the year 5,797 *bighas* of waste land were taken up for cultivation and 1,036 *bighas* of settled land were relinquished. The demand on account of land revenue, both ordinary and *pothang*, including arrears was Rs. 4,40,745, and of this Rs. 3,96,507 or 89·96 per cent. were collected, Rs. 2,250 were remitted, Rs. 502 were paid as fees to mauzadars and Rs. 41,486 remained outstanding. House-tax in the hills was levied at the usual rate of Rs. 3 on all houses in the hills and annas ten on the houses of all Nagas and Kukis cultivating land in the valley or Jiribam. The demand, including arrears of Rs. 6,650, was Rs. 78,364, of which Rs. 72,299 were collected.

Production and trade. 6. The area under rice cultivation was estimated at 140,165 acres, and for all other crops together at 13,223 acres. The rainfall of the year was normal and the outturn of rice good, but owing to a poor harvest in the previous year, the price of rice rose to an abnormal height. In spite of the embargo on the export of rice, which was not removed till well after the commencement of the harvest, the price of common rice at Imphal rose to Rs. 4 per maund in May and Rs. 5 in August. This was not a high price compared with other parts of Assam, but it was altogether extraordinary for Manipur, as the average price during August for the preceding five years was just under Rs. 2 per maund. Though there was no actual famine, severe distress prevailed for some time and relief works had to be opened. Rice was also distributed to the really indigent. Floods caused temporary distress in several parts of the State. Sericulture was not very successful and was worked at a loss, while weaving, though a considerable industry in Manipur, is mainly for local consumption, as the handlooms in use are primitive and laborious. The Bombay-Burma Trading Corporation, Limited, felled and logged some of the trees on the borders of Kabaw Valley which they girdled in 1912-13. The chief exports are rice, timber and cattle. During the year 2,614 cattle (including buffaloes) and 380 ponies were exported, of which 2,000 and 27 respectively were brought from Burma. The embargo on the export of indigenous cattle, mentioned in last year's report, was still in force.

Justice. 7. The number of offences reported rose from 726 to 760 and the number of persons brought to trial from 1,131 to 1,203 : of these persons 362 were convicted and 580 were acquitted or discharged. The civil courts disposed of 3,551 suits of an aggregate value of Rs 1,46,390 as against 3,224 in the preceding year, and of 678 applications for execution of decrees.

8. The gross total revenue of the State, excluding the "water rate," was Rs. 6,40,225 as against Rs. 6,37,742 in the previous year. Receipts increased under the heads "Fishery," "Foreigners' tax," "Salt," "Tea seed," "Law and Justice," "Excise" and "Miscellaneous," and decreased under the heads "Land Revenue," "Hill tribes," "Ferry revenue," "Forests," "Jail," and "Income-tax on Foreigners and Foreigners' Trading License fees." The total expenditure was Rs. 6,47,904 against Rs. 6,19,900 in the previous year. In this was included a sum of Rs. 28,000 paid for the purchase of four motor ambulances presented by His Highness the Raja to the Imperial Government, of which three were sent to Mesopotomia and one to Aden. During the year a sum of Rs. 33,800 was invested in the Government Four per cent. Terminable Loan of 1915-16. At the close of the year the State was indebted to Government, on account of the water-works loan, to the extent of Rs. 1,45,265. The closing balance, exclusive of the invested amount, was Rs. 3,20,582, including Rs. 9,031 on account of the water rate. Finance.

9. There was no epidemic during the year under report. Out of 13,984 vaccinations, 12,974 were successful. Rinderpest was entirely absent. There was a slight increase in the average attendance of pupils owing to the abolition of school fees in the lower primary schools in the valley. Miscellaneous.

FRONTIER TRIBES.

10. During the year under report no operations beyond the frontier were undertaken. The Political Officers continued to extend their influence over the tribes under their control and useful tours were made by the Political Officer, Central and Eastern Sections, North East-Frontier, in the course of which he settled and adjudicated many long-standing inter-tribal disputes and assessed to taxes villages cultivating in the plains. The conduct of the tribes on the Western Section of the North-East Frontier was generally good. The sole offenders were a party of Apa Tanangs who carried off two Daflas from just outside the Inner Line. No epidemics were reported from the hills, where the crops were exceptionally good. General.

11. The customary fair was held at Darranga and was attended by about 2,500 Bhutias. Trade statistics, so far as they could be relied on, showed a decrease in trade. Bhutias.

12. The usual fair was held at Udalguri and the customary *posa* of Rs. 5,000 was paid to the two Jongpens of Taklungjong. The fair was visited by Guru Rimpoche, who is the incarnation of the Tawang Monastery. The Rupa and Shergaon Monbas received their *posa* at their winter village of Doimara. Monbas.

13. These people showed more desire for establishing closer relationship with Government than any other tribes. They made an excellent pony track from their chief village to the plains. *Posa* was paid to the chief as usual. Akas.

14. Daflas and Miri Abors came down in rather larger numbers than usual and received their customary *posa*. Daflas and Miri Abors.

15. One case of capture of two Daflas by the Apa Tanangs was reported. One of the Daflas was returned, but further negotiations were interrupted owing to the path to the hills being closed on account of the early rains. Apa Tanangs.

16. A state of war existed between the sections of the Minyong, but there was no killing on either side. Dosing and Riga are at present the two disturbers of the peace among the Abor tribes. Further west as far as the Subansiri the Galong Abors gave no trouble. Abors.

17. The only case of any importance was the killing of two Bebejiyas by a Taroan, whom they with others of their village had seized in British territory and were leading off bound into captivity with the idea of selling him as a slave. The Taroan, however, managed to free himself at night and after killing two of his captors escaped. He appeared before the Political Officer when summoned and enquiry showed that he was not to blame. Except for this one instance, the Chulikata and Bebejiya Mishmis gave no ground for complaint and came down in larger numbers for trade. The Upper Mijus from near Rima came down for the first time to Sadiya for their necessities. The Mijus and the Taroan were both friendly and helpful. Mishmis.

18. The Khamtis and Singphos gave no trouble. The Wakhet chief, who was kept in Dibrugarh jail as a political *detenu*, was released during the year by the orders of the Chief Commissioner. Khamtis and Singphos.

Margherita, Rangpang, Barduaria, Namsangiya and Barmithonia Nagas. Naga Hills.

19. The conduct of the Nagas to the south of the Lakhimpur district was good. Only one case of petty theft of iron from Margherita by Rangpang Nagas was reported.

20. There was peace on the frontier throughout the year, but beyond it there was a certain amount of restlessness. Several incidents were reported in one of which two heads were taken. In no case was British territory violated.

Khasi and Jaintia Hills.

21. Various complaints were made against the Siem of Mylliem, but on the whole the relations of parties in this State improved. The slight improvement in the affairs of Mawsynram mentioned in the last year's report was not maintained, and as a punishment some of the malcontents were deported from the State and others fined and warned.

Lushai Hills, Garo Hills, Hill Tippera.

22. Politically the year was uneventful in the Lushai and the Garo Hills, except that two women of Sherkor in the former district were kidnapped while travelling in the unadministered territory by the villagers of Khawbung, a sub-village of Zongling. The women, however, managed to escape and returned to Sherkor. Relations with the Raja of Hill Tippera continued to be friendly.

SECTION 10.—CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1915-16.]

Condition of the people.

23. The inhabitants of the Surma Valley suffered very severely from the exceptional floods of June, July and August. Great damage was done in Cachar, but the district is a rich one and the effects of the floods had almost ceased to be felt by the end of the cold weather. Sylhet sustained even more serious losses and there was much distress, particularly in the eastern and northern parts of the district. Large sums were spent on gratuitous relief and agricultural loans were freely distributed. The people did all they could to extend the area under winter crops, but here again they suffered from the abnormal drought during the cold weather, and their efforts were to a great extent wasted. In the North Cachar Hills the villagers who grew cotton and sugarcane were handicapped by the closing of the railway which deprived them of cheap means of transit for their produce, but they profited from a ready market for their labour. In the three hill districts, *viz.*, the Naga Hills, the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, and the Lushai Hills, the year was, on the whole, a prosperous one.

In the Assam Valley the year was unfavourable to cultivators owing to bad weather and the damage done to crops by floods and cattle-disease. The winter rice was damaged to a greater or less degree in almost every district by the floods of July and August and suffered not only from excessive rain but also from the prolonged periods of drought with which it was interspersed. The winter rainfall was considerably below normal with far from satisfactory effects on jute and mustard.

The price of rice in the Surma Valley fluctuated considerably owing to the temporary interruption of railway communications, but on their restoration the importation of Rangoon rice had a very steadying effect. There was no marked change in the price of other commodities. In the Assam Valley the prices of food-grains were high throughout the year owing chiefly to the high prices obtaining in foreign markets. The migration of cultivators from Eastern Bengal into the Assam Valley and the Sunamganj subdivision of Sylhet continued. Immigration increased appreciably in the Eastern Duars of the Goalpara district, where Santhals continued to arrive from Dumka, Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri. The influx of immigrants from Cachar and Sylhet into the Nowgong district was checked by the temporary closing of the Hill Section of the Assam-Bengal Railway.

CHAPTER II.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAND.

SECTION 1.—REALISATION OF THE REVENUE.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1915-16.]

General. 24. An account of the demand and collection of land revenue will be found in Chapter V "Revenue and Finance." During the year there was an increase of 136 square miles in the settled area and the revenue demand on the current account rose by Rs. 1,40,567 to Rs. 73,84,152, the incidence of revenue per square mile being Rs. 535·97.

Permanently-settled estates. 25. There was no change in the area and revenue demand of the permanently-settled estates in the Assam Valley Division. In the Surma Valley, the total number of these estates increased by 3, but there was a decrease in the area and revenue by 26 acres and Rs. 25, respectively, as compared with the preceding year. Eight estates with a revenue of Rs. 4 were purchased by Government at the sales for arrears of revenue and transferred from the "permanently-settled" to the "temporarily-settled" class, while there was an increase of eleven estates owing to partitions. The acquisition of land for public purposes accounted for the decrease in area and revenue. The revenue demand amounted to Rs. 4,59,441, of which Rs. 2,59,860 or 69·00 per cent. of the current and Rs. 82,683 or 99·79 per cent. of the arrear account were realised and Rs. 1,17,439 remained outstanding. The district of Sylhet which had suffered from the most devastating floods was responsible for the whole of this balance.

Temporarily-settled estates. 26. Temporarily-settled estates, which do not include land held revenue-free or waste land grants, form 42·39 per cent. of the total settled area of the province and contribute 89·84 per cent. of the total revenue demand. The total area settled at full rates for ordinary cultivation in the Surma Valley and Hill Districts Division increased from 748,520 to 750,289 acres and the revenue demand assessed thereon from Rs. 8,12,851 to Rs. 8,17,494. The increase in area and revenue was due mainly to the settlement of new or relinquished lands in the district of Cachar, to the re-settlement of *Nankar* estates and new settlements in the district of Sylhet and to the settlement of new lands for wet rice cultivation in the Jowai subdivision of the district of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. In the Assam Valley, the total fully-assessed area settled for ordinary cultivation increased by 70,324 acres and the revenue demand assessed thereon by Rs. 1,14,138. There was an increase in the settled area and revenue in all districts which was most marked in the district of Kamrup where the area and revenue increased by 19,397 acres and Rs. 27,024, respectively. The steady immigration of Santhals, from Bengal into the Eastern Duars portion of Goalpara and the taking up by them of land for cultivation were responsible for an increase of 7,541 acres in area and Rs. 15,222 in revenue in this district. The increase in the district of Darrang was attributed to the extension of ordinary cultivation owing chiefly to an influx of new settlers from Sibsagar, Mymensingh and Nepal. In Nowgong and Sibsagar the ordinary extension of cultivation and, in the case of Nowgong, the colonisation of waste land by cultivators from Eastern Bengal and the Surma Valley were the chief factors to which the increase both of area and revenue was attributable. The district of Lakhimpur showed an increase of 11,648 acres in settled area and of Rs. 22,536 in the revenue demand, which was due in part to large areas of new land in the North Lakhimpur subdivision being taken up by immigrants from the Jorhat and Golaghat subdivisions. The increase in the Garo Hills was due to extension of survey and cultivation. The current demand rose from Rs. 68,17,935 to Rs. 69,67,321 and the arrear demand from Rs. 2,86,099 to Rs. 4,38,367. Collections were less satisfactory than in the preceding year, 93·03 per cent. of the current and 90·13 per cent. of the arrear demand being realised as against 95·05 per cent. and 96·30 per cent., respectively, in 1914-15. Rupees 16,102 were remitted.

Remittance of revenue and local rates by special money-order. 27. The system of remitting revenue and local rates by special money-order is in force in Sylhet only. The number of such money orders rose from 2,675 to 2,695, and the amount remitted from Rs. 9,271 to Rs. 9,607.

Coercive measures employed for collection of revenue. 28. The number of notices of demand issued declined from 40,463 to 197, a decrease which was due mainly to the discontinuance of their issue in the district of Sibsagar. The number of warrants of attachment issued rose from 36,542 to 44,750, an increase which was shared by all districts except Sibsagar and is attributed to a freer use by

mauzadars of their new powers of issuing attachment orders under Section 69 of the Assam Land and Revenue Regulation. Though the number of sale notices increased from 11,732 to 13,119, the number of estates actually sold decreased from 532 to 455.

Processes. 29. The number of processes issued rose from 191,853 to 204,548 and the fees realised from Rs. 1,30,147 to Rs. 1,42,419.

Miscellaneous land revenue. 30. The total demand on account of miscellaneous land revenue rose from Rs. 6,67,751 to Rs. 7,20,092, of which Rs. 6,92,931 or 96·23 per cent. were collected, Rs. 4,077 remitted and Rs. 23,084 remained outstanding.

Loans. 31. The total amount advanced under the Agriculturists' Loans Act was Rs. 21,42,212 against Rs. 67,327 in the preceding year. Nearly the whole of this large sum, *i.e.*, more than 20½ lakhs, was advanced to cultivators in Sylhet and Cachar whose crops had been destroyed by the disastrous floods of 1915. The amount outstanding at the commencement of the year was Rs. 7,33,769. Of the total of Rs. 28,75,981 outstanding, Rs. 5,20,300 inclusive of interest fell due during the year, of which Rs. 2,21,228 were collected, Rs. 25 remitted, Rs. 1,56,447 suspended and Rs. 1,42,600 remained overdue at the end of the year. No fresh loans were issued in the Lushai Hills, but the loans outstanding amounted to Rs. 4,96,084, of which Rs. 2,03,774 inclusive of interest fell due for collection within the year. A sum of Rs. 92,111 was realised, Rs, 50,174 were suspended and Rs. 61,489 were overdue at the end of the year.

Other revenue work. 32. No new work of importance was undertaken in the Surma Valley with the exception of the re-excavation as a relief work of the Rajarkhal in Pargana Ichhakalash. In the Assam Valley a portion of the bed of the Alpa river and a number of surface drains in the district of Kamrup were excavated to drain the water-logged tracts in mauzas Dharmapur and Sarukhetri. The Kharai bund in the district of Darrang, which was breached by the floods of the Brahmaputra in June 1915, was repaired. In Nowgong a sluice gate was erected at Dhepajan and the cross-bunds at Nazirajan and Dhepajan for the drainage of the town were completed. A committee consisting of the Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner and the Subdivisional Officer, with the Chief Engineer and three officers of the Public Works Department, considered what action was required in connection with the restoration and maintenance of the river bunds in the Sibsagar district. They approved proposals for the repair of the Dehing, Disang, Darika and Dikhu bunds but drew attention to the dangers attendant on the bunding of both banks of rivers in Assam. The steps taken by the Public Works Department to protect the river bank along the Red road in Dibrugarh were successful, although the erosion of the bank at the steamer-ghat below the town continued.

Partitions. 33. Omitting summary partitions under rule 203 of the Assam Land Records Manual, 258 partition cases were instituted during the year. Of the total of 556 cases, including 298 pending from the previous year, 255 cases were disposed of and 301 cases remained pending at the close of the year.

SECTION 2.—Surveys and Settlements.

Survey. 34. The arrangement which had been in force since the re-formation of the province in April 1912 under which the Assam Survey Department was a joint charge with that of Bengal was terminated in November 1915. The Government of India then approved of the proposal to entrust the control of the Assam Surveys to the Superintendent, Eastern Circle, Survey of India, as an experimental measure, and the change took place with effect from 6th December 1915.

In the Goalpara district the traversing of the Sidli-Chirang boundary was nearly finished during the year; the temporary demarcation of the Guma-Ghurla boundary and the demarcation of the Sidli, Ripu, Guma-Parbatjoar, possession boundary were completed. The extension traverse of 92 villages in Kamrup, covering an area of 151 square miles, and 44 villages in Darrang, comprising an area of 84 square miles, was carried out.

In Sylhet the survey and temporary demarcation of the Patharia-Langla boundary were completed and the *thak* line was relaid on the ground on the Patharia-Pratabgarh boundary. In the same district the traversing of 59 linear miles of *Thak* No. 1743 was accomplished.

The Shillong Drawing Office printed 50,155 copies of maps for Assam, of which 26,677 were village maps. District maps required for the use of schools in the province were also printed. In the Survey School near Gauhati, 18 pupils appeared

in the Mandals' Certificate Examination and 13 of them passed the tests successfully. One Sub-Deputy Collector and one Supervisor Kanungo were trained in survey and settlement work.

35. The re-settlement of the Cachar district was in progress during the year. Mr. W. L. Scott was in charge of the operations for the whole period and the subordinate staff was practically the same as in the previous year. The programme for the year consisted of (*a*) the record attestation of the three remaining groups Banraj, Chatla and Vernerpur and, if possible, the submission of their assessment reports and completion of the final maps, *dagchithas* and *jamabandis*, (*b*) the preparation of assessment statements, submission of group reports and completion of records of the Katigora, Silchar and Hailakandi groups. It was also intended to carry out the revenue attestation of the Katigora group during the year. The field programme of record attestation was completed, but the programme of office work was not finished owing to unavoidable delay in the preparation of assessment statistics. The fairing out of the records of the Katigora, Silchar and Hailakandi groups was started towards the close of the year. As the final sanction of Government to the new rate for the Katigora group could not be recorded pending disposal of objections which were submitted towards the end of August, the revenue attestation of the group was not undertaken during the year. The total number of villages of which record attestation was completed was 366. This excludes 27 sheets which cover only tea-garden grants which do not come under re-settlement. The method of attestation was the same as that adopted in the previous year. Enquiries into the condition of second class fisheries and regarding land suitable for grazing grounds were made along with attestation. The total number of mutations during the year was 4,789 in the Sadr and 2,386 in the Hailakandi subdivision : these relate to the parganas attested during the year. The assessment reports of two groups, Katigora and Hailakandi, were completed during the year and the preliminary sanction of Government to the rates of the former group was communicated to the Settlement Officer. Settlement.

36. The re-settlement operations of the Jaintia parganas were also in charge of Mr. W. L. Scott, with a subordinate staff of two permanent Assistant Settlement Officers, as in the previous year. This staff was supplemented by two Extra Assistant Settlement Officers to complete the field work in the cold weather. The programme for the year was the attestation of the record for the whole area, and the preparation of assessment statements and group reports, but only attestation could be completed and that too with some difficulty. Record attestation was much hampered by the presence of numerous partition and mutation cases. Appeals were presented in much greater numbers than in Cachar. Jaintia.

37. The experimental settlement operations in the three permanently-settled parganas of Renga, Baraya and Dakhinkach in this district were in charge of Mr. C. Gimson with a staff of three Assistant Settlement Officers. Various minor operations were completed with regard to these areas. Twelve hundred and nine ordinary disputes and 893 objections under section 103A of the Bengal Tenancy Act were disposed of during the year. Comparison and check of the records in village areas were completed in 30 out of 92 mauzas and final inking was done in 8 out of 168 sheets. On the whole, the progress was satisfactory. Dassana Settlement, Sylhet.

Besides the regular settlement operations mentioned above, work in connection with the revision of classification in areas taken up after re-settlement in the districts of Sibsagar and Kamrup was also in progress.

Extension surveys were carried out by local agency in the districts of Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang, Nowgong, Sibsagar, and Lakhimpur, the actual area surveyed being about 165 square miles.

SECTION 3.—LAND RECORDS.

38. There was no change in the sanctioned strength of Kanungos and recorders during the year under report beyond the addition of a 3rd-grade mandal to the Nowgong Land Records staff. Steps continued to be taken to secure resident recorders for all the lots. Land Records.

SECTION 4.—SETTLEMENT FOR SPECIAL CULTIVATION (WASTE LANDS).

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1915-16.]

39. The area settled for special cultivation increased by 13,999 acres to 1,176,426 acres and the revenue assessed thereon by Rs. 18,348 to Rs. 7,60,147. The increase in area and revenue occurred chiefly in the districts of Cachar, Darrang, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur and was due to new settlements and progressive assessment. Settlement for special cultiation.

SECTION 5.—GOVERNMENT ESTATES.

Nil.

SECTION 6.—WARDS' ESTATES.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1915-16.]

General.

40. The release of the Hoshenpur and Mufti Nuruddin Estates reduced the number of estates under the management of the Court of Wards from 11 to 9. The post of General Manager was held in abeyance from the 1st April 1916. Kumar Gopika Raman Ray was placed in charge of the Bidyanagar tea garden which belongs to his estate.

Revenue, rent and cesses.

41. The total revenue and cesses due to Government, including arrears, was Rs. 24,677, of which sum Rs. 22,154 were paid, leaving a balance of Rs. 2,523. The Khan Bahadur's estate was responsible for Rs. 2,503 of this amount. All the estates with one exception paid off the rent and cesses due to superior landlords. The Khan Bahadur's estate was in arrears for Rs. 2,138.

Collections.

42. The demand on account of rents and cesses due to the estates, including arrears of Rs. 3,13,766, amounted to Rs. 6,22,585. Total collections, both current and arrear demand, only amounted to 60·42 per cent. of the current demand. All the estates were responsible for the large decrease in the percentage of collections. The results in the Kumar's estate were again particularly poor, collections only amounting to 48·45 per cent. of the current demand. The collections in all the other estates except the Pallakandi and Ilias Ali estates were below 75 per cent. The marked falling off in the percentage of collections was reported to be due mainly to the floods of 1915 and the scarcity prevailing all over the district of Sylhet.

Debts.

43. The debts of the estate of Kumar Gopika Raman Ray, which is heavily encumbered, were reduced by Rs. 76,920, and a small reduction was effected also in the case of the Khan Bahadur's estate. The estates of Prithimpassa, Pallakandi and Ilias Ali are solvent.

Management charges and improvement.

44. The cost of management fell from 19·18 to 16·80 per cent. of the current demand, which was due in part to the holding in abeyance of the post of General Manager.

The Prithimpassa estate spent Rs. 4,120 on schools, dispensaries, and other works of public utility, and the estate of Kumar Gopika Raman Ray contributed a sum of Rs. 2,620 towards the maintenance of the Raja Girish Chandra High School in Sylhet.

SECTION 7.—REVENUE AND RENT-PAYING CLASSES.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1915-16.]

Bengal Tenancy Act.

45. Sections 93 to 100 of the Bengal Tenancy Act were introduced in the permanently-settled areas of the district of Goalpara to provide for the appointment of a common manager in estates in which one was required, a series of disputes among the joint proprietors of the Mechpara estate having resulted in the appointment of four different managers.

Relations between Landlords and tenants.

46. In parts of the Goalpara district there was some friction between landlords and tenants and after the close of the year a special officer was deputed to enquire into and report on the defects of the existing rent law.

Rent receipts.

47. The question of legislation with regard to the prescription of a special form of rent receipt in the districts of Sylhet and Goalpara was under consideration.

CHAPTER III.

PROTECTION.

SECTION 1. LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY.

[See General Administration Report for 1911-1912, Part II, pages 92-94.]

SECTION 2.—COURSE OF LEGISLATION.

1. The Bengal Municipal Act, III of 1884, was substituted for Act V of 1876, in the Nowgong Municipality.

The provisions of Part IX of Bengal Act, III of 1884, were extended to the whole, and of Part VI to Wards Nos. I and II of the same Municipality.

The Vaccination Act, XIII of 1880, was extended to the Barpeta Municipality. The provisions of Section 241 of Bengal Act, III of 1884, were extended to the Gauhati Municipality.

The provisions of Part VII of Bengal Act, III of 1884, and of Sections 250 to 260(*a*) and 274 of Part VI of the said Act were extended to the Jorhat Municipality.

The provisions of Part X and of several sections of Part VI of Bengal Act, III of 1884, were extended to the Karimganj and Sunamganj Municipalities.

The Bengal Vaccination Act, V of 1880, was also extended to these two Municipalities and to the Maulvi Bazar Union.

Sections 103A, 103B, 105, 105A, 106, 107, 108, 108A, 109, 109A, 109B, 109C, 110, 111A, 111B, and 147B of the Bengal Tenancy Act, VIII of 1885, were extended to all the estates borne on the revenue roll of parganas Renga, Dakhinkach, and Baraya in the district of Sylhet and also to *Chit* land situated within the geographical boundaries of these parganas.

SECTION 3.—POLICE.

MILITARY POLICE.

Personnel.

49. Captain M. C. Coote returned from medical leave during the year and rejoined the Darrang Battalion. Apart from this there was no change in the *personnel* of European officers, the orders permitting officers to rejoin their regiments on the expiry of their term of service with the military police having been suspended in the interests of the public service for the duration of the war.

The news of the death of Major H. C. Nicolay was received with great regret. Captain A. L. M. Molesworth returned from the front after recovery from his wound, but as his services were required by the military authorities he was not permitted to rejoin the Military Police.

During the year 700 volunteers of the Assam Military Police together with 15 signallers were sent for service with the regular army. The total number of Military Police volunteers who had joined the army up to the end of September 1916 was 2,347 officers, non-commissioned officers and men.

Strength and distribution.

50. There was a large increase in the enlistment of recruits which rose from 859 in 1914 to 1,597 in 1915.

The Military Police Battalions were treated during the year as depôts from which men could be drafted after training to the army and to facilitate this process permission was obtained to recruit up to 1,000 for each battalion. As a result there was for a time a shortage of men for routine duties in the Lakhimpur Military Police Battalion. His Highness the Raja of Manipur accordingly came forward and very kindly placed 50 Manipuri State Police at the disposal of the Administration. The percentage of Gurkhas enlisted was 80·96 against 83·81 in 1914.

Efficiency.

51. General E. S. May, Commanding, 8th (Lucknow) Division, inspected the Naga Hills, the Lakhimpur and the Darrang Military Police Battalions, and expressed himself as much pleased with their efficiency and general smartness. Effect was given to his recommendations as far as funds and other circumstances allowed.

Casualties.

52. Casualties decreased under the heads "retirement," "resignation," "death" and "failure of men to join on expiry of leave," but there was an increase in the number of "dismissals," "discharges" and "desertions." The increase under the head "desertions" was only natural in view of the extraordinarily large number of recruits obtained.

Health.

53. The number of deaths decreased from 26 to 25, and the percentage of admissions into hospital to the actual strength fell from 72·20 to 48·12. This improvement in health was probably largely due to the fact that there were no tours or promenades of importance across the frontier.

Military operations and Frontier outposts.

54. No Military operations were undertaken during the year, but escorts when required were supplied as usual to Political Officers on their tours.

The garrisons at Mokokchang, Wakching, Kobo and Pasighat remained under strength throughout the year, as all available men were required for the army and the strength of the outposts at Lungleh, Tuipang and Silchar was reduced, while those at Harmati, Singlijan, Tezpur, North Vanlaiphai and Champhai were temporarily withdrawn. Guards were stationed at Tirap and North Lakhimpur, but no garrisons were provided for Defu, Dijmur and Karimpani.

CIVIL POLICE.

Strength.

55. There was a net increase during the year of 26 officers and men to the sanctioned strength of the force. Recruiting, however, showed a further decrease, only 388 men being enlisted in 1915 as compared with 429 in the previous year. Of the recruits, 258 were enlisted locally. This was an increase on the figures for 1914 and was apparently due to the increase of pay. The system of drilling men at police stations twice a week was continued with good results. The work of the Circle Inspectors showed a further improvement. The reports received with regard to the investigating staff were generally favourable.

Conduct.

56. Three Sub-Inspectors were judicially punished during the year, but the number of men so punished fell to 60 from 69 in the preceding year. Departmental punishments rose from 893 to 1,036. Ninety-nine criminal charges were brought against the police as compared with 70 in 1914. Eighteen of these were charges of torture, extortion and bribery. Of the three cases of torture, two were decided as false and the third as non-cognizable, being a case of simple assault only. Of the 7 cases of extortion, two were decided as false and 5 as true, 2 of which ended in conviction. Four of the 8 cases of bribery were decided as false and 2 as doubtful. Only one was declared true. Of the 98 charges brought against the police which were decided during the year, 32 were found to be false and 57 were declared true. Thirty-two of the latter ended in conviction, but of these, 30 were for minor offences only. There were 4 civil suits against two Sub-Inspectors and three constables, three of which were dismissed. The plaintiff in the fourth suit having died, the suit was withdrawn by his son.

Health.

57. There was an unusual rise in the number of deaths from 29 in 1914 to 50 in 1915, but the increase in the number of admissions to hospital was slight, from 1,241 in 1914 to 1,275 in 1915.

Fifteen of the deaths occurred in Sylhet; this was attributed to the unusual unhealthiness of the year owing to the floods.

Quinine in prophylactic doses was administered with good results and mosquito nets were supplied in some of the unhealthy stations.

Reserves.

58. The drill, discipline and musketry of the armed reserve were satisfactory. Many men volunteered for service with the army. Thirty-nine men of the Sylhet armed reserve were accepted and are now at the front.

The ordinary reserve again proved inadequate and its numbers had to be supplemented by men detailed from the armed reserve for the purpose.

The increase of pay stimulated recruitment, but leave could not be granted up to the prescribed limit as the newly recruited men had to be sent to the Constable's Training School.

Railway Police.

59. The newly opened Sylhet-Kulaura extension of the Assam-Bengal Railway was included within the jurisdiction of the Srimangal police station. Missing goods cases fell from 480 to 189, of which 113 were reported to be criminal as compared with 121 in the preceding year. This marked fall was principally due to the decrease of goods traffic owing to the war and to the temporary closing of the hill section. The vigilance of the armed police deputed to guard goods wagons was also partly responsible for this satisfactory result. Running train thefts and cases of stone-throwing decreased, but there was an increase in the number of cases of obstruction, and accidents rose from 171 to 207, 57 of which were attended with loss of life.

River Police.

60. During the year the Government of India sanctioned the creation of a River Police district in Assam. The two floating stations at Madna and Markuli were taken over from Bengal and the steam launch 'Scout' continued to patrol the water-ways in Sylhet.

Rural Police.

61. Sylhet, Cachar and Goalpara are the only three districts in the province in which the village Chaukidari Act is in force. The reports of the local officers on the working of the chaukidars were generally favourable. The number of punishments increased from 35·3 to 55·06 per cent. of the force, but there was also a considerable rise in the number of rewards.

The large number of chaukidars in Sylhet remaining unpaid at the end of the year was noticeable. Steps were taken to remedy this unsatisfactory state of affairs.

Finance.

62. The total net cost of the Department was Rs. 22,89,978 as compared with Rs. 23,32,110 in 1914. The chief decreases were under the heads "Superintendence" and "River Police," due to the fact that extra expenditure was incurred under these heads in the previous year owing to the construction of two steam launches.

Crime.

63. The number of cognizable cases decreased by 611. Of those dealt with by the police, 36·1 per cent. were brought to trial as compared with 37·4 per cent. in 1914. The percentage of convictions also fell from 80·9 per cent. to 78·9 per cent. during the year.

There was an increase of 271 cases of serious crime for which the Assam Valley was mainly responsible. The increase was marked under the head "burglary." The reason assigned for this was the failure of the crops and the high price of food grains during the year. The decrease in the number of the true cases of dacoity from 17 in 1914 to 7 was satisfactory. Two river dacoities were reported during the year. As a result of the enforcement of the provisions of the Criminal Tribes Act (III of 1911) and the surveillance exercised by the river patrol police, the Kamargaon gang of river dacoits in Sylhet district was inactive during the year. A wandering gang of thieves, known as Karwal Nats, in the Kamrup district was bound down under Section 110, Criminal Procedure Code. Certain gangs of Gains and Sandars and the Karwal Nats were proclaimed as criminal tribes under the Criminal Tribes Act, and 49 members of the Karwal Nats gang were registered in the Kamrup district.

Provincial Statement J.

The number of cases remanded more than six times remained almost stationary. The percentage was high in the districts of Kamrup and Goalpara.

Political Crime.

64. There was no political case during the year under report.

Miscellaneous.

65. The sanctioned strength of the Criminal Investigation Department remained unchanged during the year. Some cases of murder, dacoity, swindling, and 16 insurance fraud cases were dealt with by the Department.

The Finger Print Bureau received 1,154 search slips, and previous convictions were traced in 94 cases. The staff remained the same as in the previous year.

SECTION 4.—CRIMINAL JUSTICE.

PLAINS DISTRICTS.

Staff.

66. The staff employed on criminal work in the plains portion of the province consisted of two Sessions Judges, one Additional Judge, eight District Magistrates; sixty stipendiary and twenty-five Honorary Magistrates. Besides the above, a temporary Additional Sessions Judge and a temporary Assistant Sessions Judge were also employed in the Assam Valley.

The following statement gives the figures for the past three years of offences reported, cases accepted as true and cases brought to trial with the ratio of complaints dismissed and of persons convicted :—

	Offences reported.	Cases accepted as true.	Cases brought to trial.	Ratio of complaints dismissed.	Ratio of persons convicted.
1	2	3	4	5	6
				Per cent.	Per cent.
1915	41,951	28,649	19,416	32·4	42·2
1914	44,819	28,516	19,746	35·6	1·2
1913	41,767	27,427	19,520	34·1	42·7

Magistrates' courts.

67. Of 31,443 persons whose cases were decided by Magistrates, 13,277 were convicted, 4,848 on summary and 8,429 on regular trial. 207 cases were committed to the Sessions and 19,267 were finally disposed of; 1,025 cases were pending at the end of the year. Of the cases disposed of, 27·2 per cent. were tried under summary procedure.

60,638 witnesses were examined. Of these, 65·4 per cent. were discharged on the first day of the trial and 1,385, as against 1,297 in the previous year, were detained for more than three days.

At the close of the year 2,467 persons were awaiting trial and 102 were in custody.

Magistrates sentenced 3,093 persons to imprisonment, 9,559 to fine, 153 to whipping and ordered 233 persons to fulfil contracts under Act XIII of 1859. The fines imposed amounted to Rs. 1,29,567, of which Rs. 1,09,045 were realized and Rs. 22,552 were paid as compensation to complainants.

Bonds for keeping the peace were taken from 797 persons and 231 persons were required to furnish security for good behaviour, 165 of whom were sentenced to undergo imprisonment in default. In 79 cases complainants were found to have brought frivolous or vexatious charges and were ordered to pay compensation to the accused.

ourts of essions.

68. Two hundred and seventeen cases were disposed of, involving 475 persons, of whom 137 were tried by jury, and 228 with the aid of assessors. Three hundred and seven persons were convicted, 160 were discharged or acquitted and in the case of 8 reference was made to the High Court. Five persons were sentenced to death, and one case in which this penalty had been awarded was pending at the opening of the year. On reference to the High Court, three of the persons concerned in these six cases were transported for life and three suffered the extreme penalty.

Nineteen persons were sentenced to transportation for life and 11 to transportation for a term of years, 273 to rigorous imprisonment and 28 to fine. The Judge disagreed with the verdict of the jury in the case of 38 persons. Reference was made to the High Court under section 307 of the Code of Criminal Procedure with regard to 3 persons, and 3 such references were pending at the opening of the year. The verdict of the jury was accepted in one case, set aside in two and modified in two. One case remained pending at the close of the year.

In trials with the aid of assessors the Judge concurred with both assessors in 174 instances, concurred with one assessor in 32 and disagreed with both in 22.

The number of witnesses examined was 2,059, of whom 399 or 19·3 per cent. were detained for more than three days. The average duration of cases in Sessions Courts was 43·7 days.

Appellate Jurisdiction. The High Court. Sessions Courts.

69. The High Court disposed of 80 appeals during the year. The sentences passed in the Sessions Courts were upheld in 67 cases, reversed in 3 and varied in 10. Three appeals remained for disposal at the end of the year.

70. Five hundred and sixty-six appeals, involving 1,010 persons, were disposed of with the result that the original sentences were confirmed in 65 per cent., modified in 14·3 per cent. and reversed in 20·5 per cent. of the cases. New trials were ordered in the cases of 2 persons.

Magistrates.

71. District Magistrates disposed of the appeals of 450 persons, dismissing the appeal in 60·9 per cent. of the cases, modifying the original sentence in 11·5 per cent. and reversing it in 25·8 per cent. New trials were ordered in the case of 6 persons and in the case of 2 persons the proceedings were quashed.

Revision.

72. Applications for revision of orders passed by lower courts were decided in 155 cases by the High Court, in 278 cases by the Courts of Session, and in 304 cases by District Magistrates.

Receipts and Expenditure.

73. The charges incurred in criminal courts in Assam amounted to Rs. 3,94,104 and the receipts to Rs. 2,38,838. There was a decrease of Rs. 25,291 and Rs. 20,661 respectively on the figures of the preceding year.

Hill Districts and Frontier Tracts.

74. One thousand and seventy-seven cases, involving 1,692 persons, were brought to trial in hill districts and frontier tracts.

In these cases 1,208 persons were convicted, 410 were acquitted or discharged, 32 died, escaped or were transferred and 42 remained under trial at the end of the year. Fifty-five persons appealed against the sentences or orders of lower courts. In ten cases the original order was modified and in three cases the order was reversed. Two cases remained pending at the close of the year.

SECTION 5.—JAILS.

[*See* Report on the Jail Administration in the Province of Assam for the year 1915; Statistics of British India, Part VI.]

75. There was no change in the number of jails and sub-jails. General.

76. The year opened with 2,122 prisoners of all classes against 1,982 in 1914. Admissions and discharges fell from 10,251 and 10,111, respectively, in 1914 to 9,738 and 9,777 in 1915, whilst the daily average number of prisoners of all classes rose from 2,021·37 to 2,140·55. Population.

Of the convicts admitted ·32 per cent. were Christians, 41·10 per cent. Muhammadans, 51·79 per cent. Hindus and Sikhs, ·21 per cent. Buddhists and Jains and 6·58 per cent. belonged to other classes.

77. Eleven or ·29 per cent. of the convicts admitted were juvenile offenders (10 boys and 1 girl) and 133 were women. No juveniles, eligible for admission into a reformatory school, were sentenced to imprisonment. The percentage of literate male convicts was 3·79. Juvenile, female and literate offenders.

78. The daily average of under-trial prisoners was 219·46 and the average period of detention in Magistrates' cases was 15·96 days. Detention over 3 months occurred in 7 jails and sub-jails and affected 20 cases. Under-trial prisoners.

79. Seventy-five civil prisoners were received during the year under report against 87 in the preceding year. Civil prisoners.

80. There were 9 escapes in 1915, 5 from inside and 4 from outside the jails. The increase in the number of jail offences committed by convicts during the year was considerable, amounting to 797, and was probably due to an improvement in discipline. In 15 cases convicts were punished by criminal courts, and 2,548 minor and 1,139 major punishments were inflicted by Superintendents of Jails. Discipline.

81. The daily average number of sick increased from 86·29 to 104·91. The chief feature of the year was the very satisfactory fall in the death-rate per mille from 43·53 in 1914 to 21·49, the lowest figure on record for the province since 1879. This marked fall was the result of the various measures which have recently been introduced with a view to improve the health of prisoners and is noticeable in all the jails except Dibrugarh, where the high mortality as compared with the previous year was partly due to ankylostomiasis and dysentery and partly to the large percentage of prisoners admitted in indifferent or bad health. The treatment of prisoners with quinine as a prophylactic against malaria was systematically carried out in all the jails and sub-jails during the year from May to October, and every prisoner was thoroughly medically examined on admission, his weight compared with his physical equivalent and labour distributed accordingly. The total accommodation available in the jails and sub-jails of the province on the last day of the year was 2,687 or an increase of 132 as compared with the previous year. Important schemes for the increase of permanent accommodation have had to be suspended or retarded owing to lack of funds, but all jails are now supplied with water and clothing boilers and with incinerators for burning the dejecta of cholera, dysentery and diarrhœa cases, and temporary accommodation has been provided to meet the more serious cases of overcrowding. Health.

82. An average of 712·37 prisoners or 37·87 per cent. was employed on manufactures and 117·68 or 6·25 per cent. on extramural work. Notwithstanding the large increase in the jail population, the daily average number of prisoners not employed for reasons other than sickness and infirmity, and the daily average number employed on unremunerative labour, fell from 42·06 and 21·40 in 1914 to 34·60 and 14·81 respectively in the year under report. Employment.

83. Expenditure on guarding and maintaining the prisoners, including the cost of buildings and repairs, rose from Rs. 2,30,923 to Rs. 2,69,539, the increase being due to an expenditure of Rs. 60,000 on sanitary improvements and to unusually large expenditure on hospital and dietary charges. The cost per head of average strength, therefore, rose from Rs. 114-4-0 to Rs. 125-15-0 in 1915. The net cost of the Department was Rs. 2,33,036 against Rs. 1,81,716 and the net cost per head of average strength was Rs. 108-14-0 against Rs. 89-15-0 in 1914. Finance.

SECTION 6.—CIVIL JUSTICE.

PLAINS DISTRICTS.

84. The Civil Judicial staff of the Province consisted of two District Judges, one Additional District Judge, nine Subordinate Judges and thirty-two Munsifs. Of these, two Subordinate Judges and ten Munsifs employed in the district of Sylhet were Staff.

members of the Judicial Branch of the Bengal Provincial Civil Service, and the remainder were Executive Officers vested with Civil Judicial powers. The temporary staff consisted of an Additional District Judge, a Subordinate Judge and two Munsifs.

Suits.

85. The number of original suits instituted was 41,118, an increase of 292 over the figures of the previous year, and the number of suits for disposal rose from 52,853 to 54,291. Of these, 43,880 were disposed of during the year, showing an increase of 3,228 over the disposals of 1914. There was an increase in disposals in the Assam Valley and Sylhet, but in Cachar there was a decrease of 113. The number of pending cases fell from 12,220 to 10,411. The number of cases pending over one year was 219 as against 419 in 1914. Of the suits instituted, 28,879 were for money or moveables and 7,986 for rent : title and other suits numbered 4,253. There was a general increase in the duration of uncontested cases tried under the ordinary procedure. The duration of contested cases decided under the same procedure by Subordinate Judges also showed an increase, but all other classes of cases showed an improvement. 62·9 per cent. of suits decided resulted in favour of the plaintiff, 28·7 per cent. in favour of the defendants and the rest were compromised.

Execution proceedings.

86. Of the total number of applications for execution on the files, 22,884 were disposed of. Full satisfaction was obtained in 2,881 and partial satisfaction in 3,906 cases, the total amount realized being Rs. 5,86,030. In no less than 70·3 per cent. of cases the proceedings were infructuous.

Miscellaneous.

87. The number of miscellaneous cases of a judicial nature instituted during the year was 4,209. 4,256 cases were disposed of, and 875 cases were pending at the close of the year.

Of non-judicial cases mainly for deposit of rent, institutions numbered 649 and disposals 646.

Appeals : (*a*) in the High Court.

88. There were 225 appeals from decrees before the High Court. Of these, 113 were decided, the decree of the lower court being reversed in 13, and confirmed in 53 cases. Two cases were remanded to the lower courts.

(*b*) in Courts Subordinate to the High Court.

89. The number of appeals before civil courts was 2,336, of which 1,295 were disposed of, leaving 1,060 appeals pending at the close of the year. Of the pending appeals, 17 were pending for over a year as compared with 90 in 1914.

The decisions of the lower courts were affirmed in 63·8 per cent., modified in 13·5 per cent. and reversed in 17·5 per cent. of the appeals heard.

Receipts and Charges.

90. Receipts rose from Rs. 6,94,511 to Rs. 7,13,066 and charges from Rs. 3,08,123 to Rs. 3,16,761, the surplus of receipts over charges increasing from Rs. 3,86,388 to Rs. 3,96,305.

Hill Districts and Frontier Tracts.

91. In the hill districts 1,525 suits, of an aggregate value of Rs. 1,95,244, were instituted. The number of suits for disposal was 1,853, and of these 165 were transferred, 1,562 decided and 137 left pending. Of 49 appeals before the courts, 39 were decided. In 19 cases the order of the lower court was confirmed, in 2 it was reversed and in 10 modified.

SECTION 7.—REGISTRATION.

[*See* Statistical Returns of the Registration Department in Assam for the year 1915, Report on the working of the Indian Companies Act, VII of 1913, in the province of Assam for the year 1915-16, and the Report on the working of the Muhammadan Marriages and Divorces Registration Act, 1876 (Bengal Act I of 1876), the Qazis Act, XII of 1880, and the Special Marriage Act, III of 1872, in the province of Assam for the year 1915-16.]

General.

92. The permanent retention of the temporary whole-time sub-registry offices at Jorhat in the Assam Valley and at Gowainghat in the Surma Valley were sanctioned during the year. Sanction was also accorded, after the close of the year, to the permanent retention of the temporary offices at Thakurbari and Sukhair in the Sylhet district. The temporary office at Gauripur in the district of Goalpara was closed with effect from the 1st April 1915.

Documents.

93. The number of documents registered rose from 88,109 to 90,089, the bulk of the increase occurring in the district of Sylhet.

Receipts and Expenditure.

94. Receipts rose from Rs. 1,09,550 to Rs. 1,11,035 and expenditure from Rs. 62,160 to Rs. 64,136.

Muhammadan Marriages and Divorces Registration Act.

95. One new office at Srimangal in the district of Sylhet was opened, and the permanent retention of the Katlicherra office opened in 1914, in the district of Cachar, was sanctioned during the year 1915-16. The number of ceremonies registered fell from 6,967 to 6,475 owing chiefly to unfavourable conditions in Sylhet resulting from the failure of crops and slack trade.

One meeting of the Permanent Committee for the supervision of Muhammadan Marriage Registrars and Qazis was held during the year. The total income of these Registrars fell from Rs. 10,603-2-0 to Rs. 9,811-15-6.

96. Two companies limited by shares were registered during the year and applications for the registration of four other companies were received, but, as there were certain preliminary defects, these companies could not be registered during the year. Three companies went into voluntary liquidation, one was struck off the register and one was on its way to voluntary liquidation, while two were dealt with under section 247 of the Act as defunct. At the end of the year 60 companies limited by shares were at work with an aggregate paid-up capital of Rs. 21,25,689 as compared with 65 companies and a paid-up capital of Rs. 18,63,381 at the close of the previous year. Indian Companies Act.

97. There were six provident insurance societies at the beginning of the year. Having failed to register their rules within the time allowed, they were prohibited from receiving premia or contributions until their rules had been properly framed and registered. The prohibitions were subsequently withdrawn in the case of three societies. Of the remaining three, one is on its way to voluntary liquidation, and action under section 247 of the Companies Act is being taken against another, while the third has taken to loan business. Provident Insurance Societies Act.

98. One company was prosecuted under the Indian Companies Act, but the prosecution failed. Prosecutions.

SECTION 8.—MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION.

[*See* Resolution reviewing the Reports on the working of Municipalities in Assam during the year 1915-16, Statistics of British India, Part VIII.]

99. The Mangaldai and North Lakhimpur unions, which were constituted in the year 1915-16, came into active existence from the beginning of the year 1916-17. Since the close of the year a union has been constituted at Doom Dooma, in the Sadr subdivision of the Lakhimpur district, under Act V (B.C) of 1876. The provisions of Part X of Act III(B.C.) of 1884 and of several sections of Part VI were extended to the Karimganj and Sunamganj municipalities, and those of Part IX of the same Act to the Nowgong municipality, while the provisions of Part VI were extended to wards Nos. I and II of the same municipality. The provisions of Part VII of Act III(B.C.) of 1884 and those of sections 250 to 260(*a*) and 274 of Part VI of the same Act were extended to the Jorhat municipality. The provisions of section 241 of Act III(B.C.) of 1884 were extended to the Gauhati municipality. Certain bye-laws framed by the Commissioners of the Dhubri municipality for the regulation of burning ghats were confirmed. A set of rules for the conduct of elections in the Nowgong municipality was sanctioned. Certain modifications were also made in the election rules of the Tezpur municipality, and the number of Commissioners was raised from 12 to 14. Act V(B.C.) of 1880 (The Bengal Vaccination Act) was extended to the Karimganj and Sunamganj municipalities and to the Maulvi Bazar union. Act XIII of 1880 (The Vaccination Act) was extended to the Barpeta municipality. The number of meetings held by municipal bodies rose from 236 to 244, and the average percentage of attendance from 61·07 to 66·12. Constitution.

100. General or partial revisions of assessment were carried out in ten municipalities, and resulted in substantial increase of income at Shillong, Dibrugarh, Gauhati, Tezpur, Nowgong, and Jorhat. The number of rate-payers in the municipalities of the province rose from 22,152 to 22,771, and the percentage of rate-payers to the total urban population from 17·31 to 17·80. The average incidence of taxation for the province per head of population rose from Re. 1-12-8 to Rs. 2-0-9. Taxation.

101. The total income of municipal institutions, excluding opening balances, amounted to Rs. 5,62,522. The decrease of Rs. 1,65,971 as compared with the income of 1914-15 was mainly due to a reduction under the head "Grants and contributions." Omitting this head the ordinary revenues increased by Rs. 1,16,305. Grants from Government amounted to Rs. 1,06,072 against Rs. 3,88,013 in the preceding year. Income.

102. The total expenditure amounted to Rs. 5,92,215. Excluding repayments of loans, advances, deposits, etc., the ordinary expenditure during the year amounted to Rs. 5,68,375, which represents an excess of Rs. 34,408 over the figures of the preceding year. Expenditure.

PROTECTION.

Water-supply.

103. The capital outlay and maintenance charges on account of water-supply were Rs. 69,540 and Rs. 34,618 against Rs. 39,480 and Rs. 34,988, respectively, in the preceding year. The Jorhat water-works were completed during the year. Progress is being made with the construction of the Silchar, Sylhet, and Dhubri water-works, towards which the Local Administration has made considerable grants. A loan of Rs. 48,334 was granted to the Tezpur municipality, in addition to a grant of Rs. 66,666 allotted in the previous year, to finance its water-supply scheme and to meet the cost of meters for private house connections. The water-supply schemes for the Dibrugarh and Goalpara municipalities had to be postponed owing to lack of funds. A piped water-supply scheme for the town of Sibsagar is under consideration, and since the close of the year this station has been converted into a municipality under Bengal Act III of 1884 to enable the Municipal Commissioners to levy a water-rate. A small scheme for the improvement of the water-supply in the Mangaldai union by the construction of wells has been initiated, and one such well is under construction.

Public Works.

104. The expenditure on public works was Rs. 1,01,832, or Rs. 37,212 less than in the preceding year. This decrease is mainly attributable to the fact that in the previous year the municipalities utilised the last instalment of the special allotment of Rs. 75,000 made by the Local Administration for the improvement of communications in municipal areas, and completed the programme. A total sum of Rs. 77,382 was spent on the construction and maintenance of roads.

Conservancy and drainage.

105. The expenditure on conservancy rose from Rs. 1,44,365 to Rs. 1,75,219. The conservancy arrangements in most towns are still very defective and require considerable expenditure to bring them up to date. The services of the ten Sanitary Inspectors supplied to municipalities at Government expense proved of much value in securing more efficient administration of the conservancy system. The Sylhet municipality spent to great advantage Rs. 11,208 out of the Government grant of Rs. 16,200 made in 1914-15 for the improvement of its conservancy arrangements. The Silchar municipality had unfortunately to incur additional expenditure in repairing damages caused by floods. The conservancy system of the Dibrugarh municipality has been improved with the aid of a Government grant of Rs. 3,771. The scheme for the reorganisation of the conservancy system of the Goalpara municipality has been under consideration, but, owing to the financial stringency, it has not been possible for the Local Administration to make a grant for the purpose, and the municipality has been asked to draw up a programme, in consultation with the Sanitary Commissioner, for the gradual execution of the scheme from its own resources. Minor improvements to the conservancy arrangements were effected in many towns, new latrines being erected, additional sweepers employed, and nightsoil carts purchased. The drainage improvement schemes for the towns of Jorhat and Dibrugarh have been kept in abeyance pending the arrival of more prosperous conditions. The Sanitary Board's scheme for improving the town of Karimganj has also been kept in abeyance owing to financial difficulties.

Financial position.

106. The aggregate closing balances of the municipal institutions amounted to Rs. 3,99,533, or Rs. 29,693 less than those of the preceding year, and the actual balances, excluding the value of uncashed cheques, fell from Rs. 4,22,552 to Rs. 3,96,903. At the close of the year four municipalities had outstanding loans to meet, but the liabilities were not heavy, and on the whole the financial position of the municipalities of the province was sound.

Audit.

107. Insufficient attention has in too many cases been paid to the account rules, and also to the criticisms and advice contained in audit notes. The maintenance of the collection accounts in certain municipalities has been irregular, and responsible officers have failed to adhere closely to the rules. Stricter supervision and compliance with the account rules are still required. In Silchar serious irregularities in the accounts were discovered, and a sum of Rs. 126 was found to have been misappropriated. Careful enquiries were then instituted and several prosecutions undertaken, one of which ended in conviction, while others are still in progress. In Sylhet the Local Auditor discovered several instances of embezzlement by the collecting sarkars, who were prosecuted and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. In Dibrugarh cases of embezzlements against two sarkars detected last year as well as in the year under report were tried with the result that one sarkar was convicted and sentenced in the aggregate to 15 months' imprisonment accompanied by a fine of Rs. 500. A case of embezzlement was also brought to light in the Sunamganj municipality, and prosecutions have been undertaken. Other cases of defalcation of municipal money were detected in Sylhet after the close of the year, and prosecutions are in progress.

SECTION 9.—LOCAL BOARDS.

[*See* Resolution on the working of Local Boards in Assam during 1915-16 ; Statistics of British India, Part VIII.]

Local Self-Government Act.

108. The Assam Local Self-Government Act received the assent of the Governor-General in Council during the year under report and the nineteen Local Boards in the province were reconstituted under the Act on the 1st January 1916.

Composition of Local Boards.

109. One effect of this measure was to reduce the number of nominated non-official members from 58 to 45 and to increase that of the elected members from 184 to 202. The number of *ex-officio* members remained at 76, as before.

The average percentage of attendance of members at meetings rose from 58·25 to 63·47.

Finance.

110. The opening balances of the Boards aggregated Rs. 6,82,899, their receipts amounted to Rs. 21,21,413, and their expenditure to Rs. 23,00,968, leaving an aggregate closing balance of Rs. 5,03,374. The decrease of the Boards' total income, excluding deposits and advances, from Rs. 27,16,310 to Rs. 20,82,512, was due to an unavoidable reduction in Government contributions, which however still formed 46·63 per cent. of the total income of the Boards.

The work of the year—(*a*) Education.

111. The expenditure on education fell from Rs. 7,81,242 to Rs. 7,46,546 ; but its percentage on the total income of the Boards rose from 28·76 to 35·85. The number of lower primary schools rose from 3,150 to 3,162; and although less expenditure was incurred on buildings and equipment, progress was maintained in all other directions.

(*b*) Medical.

112. The number of dispensaries maintained or aided by Local Boards fell from 124 to 122 and the total expenditure on medical and sanitation exclusive of water-supply decreased from Rs. 2,77,114 to Rs. 2,66,836. The percentage of their ordinary income spent by Boards on medical charity and sanitation exclusive of earmarked Government contributions varied from 23 to 9 per cent. Ten female Sub-Assistant Surgeons or Lady Doctors and 12 midwives were employed by the Boards with assistance from the Countess of Dufferin's Fund.

(*c*) Water-supply.

113. The expenditure on water-supply rose from Rs. 1,31,780 to Rs. 1,78,192. The programmes financed from the special grants given in 1913-14 were practically completed during the year under report ; but those undertaken with the grants given during the year under the five years' scheme sanctioned in 1914-15 remained unfinished in most cases. In the Kallang river area in the Nowgong district 18 wells were dug up to the end of the year under report with the special grant of Rs. 20,000 made to the Nowgong Local Board in 1914-15.

(*d*) Communications.

114. Floods compelled Boards to increase their expenditure on repairs to roads and bridges; but the expenditure on original communication works fell, owing to the reduction of Government contributions, from Rs. 9,53,665 in the previous year to Rs. 3,47,730. The programmes financed from the two special grants of fifteen and ten lakhs made to the Boards in 1912 and 1913 have, except in the case of a few Boards, been completed. The total expenditure on village roads rose from Rs. 57,741 to Rs. 70,895.

(*e*) Veterinary.

115. The Boards' veterinary charges remained almost stationary. Serious outbreaks of cattle-disease occurred in the Nowgong district and in some localities of the Sylhet district ; but these and other minor outbreaks were checked by prompt action.

(*f*) Industrial development.

116. The carpentry and weaving classes maintained by the Dhubri Local Board in one of its schools worked fairly well. The Gauhati Board's stipendiaries successfully completed the course of instruction at the Serampur Weaving Institution, and are now employed under the Board as weaving demonstrators.

(*g*) Village Authorities.

117. The organization of a number of Village Authorities in a few circles was taken up experimentally in 1914-15, and the circles were placed in charge of experienced Sub-Deputy Collectors, so that detailed proposals might be worked out for the subdivision of the circles into "villages," and that the Village Authorities when formally constituted under the Local Self-Government Act might be fostered and supervised. The financial position, and the temporary withdrawal of the circle officers for work connected with the relief of distress, have interfered with the scheme in the Surma Valley, but a promising start has been made in the Assam Valley. In two circles in the latter valley, Village Authorities have been formally constituted under the Act, and in two others they are expected to be so constituted shortly. Some of

the Authorities have already settled down to work, and during the year under report have put village paths in order, re-opened old paths and constructed new ones. A number of old tanks have also been re-excavated and improved and several new tanks have been constructed. On the whole, the scheme has been successfully inaugurated and the prospects appear to be hopeful.

General.

118. With the introduction of the Local Self-Government Act, Local Boards in this province have attained a legal status with enlarged powers and responsibilities; and it is hoped that the measure will greatly further the cause of Local Self-Government in Assam.

In the year under report, Government grants to Local Boards were necessarily reduced, and Boards had to exercise the strictest economy in all directions. Floods further aggravated the situation, but inspite of all difficulties there was distinct, if modest, progress to be recorded.

SECTION 10.—MILITARY (VOLUNTEERING).

MILITARY (VOLUNTEERING).

Military (Volunteering).

119. The undermentioned Volunteer Corps were in existence during 1915-16:—

(1) Surma Valley Light Horse.
(2) Assam Valley Light Horse.

The total number of volunteers was:—

	On 1st April 1915.	On 1st April 1916.
Officers	88	89
Rank and file	1,298	1,295

The numbers on 1st April 1916 were made up as follows:—

Corps.	Officers (including staff and Supernumerary Officers).	Rank and file.	Reservists.	
			Officers.	Rank and file.
1	2	3	4	5
Surma Valley Light Horse ...	38	398	...	29
Assam Valley Light Horse ...	45	727	6	141
Total ...	83	1,125	6	170

120. The strength of the Corps was practically the same as in the previous year.

121. The number of members of the Volunteer Corps who joined the regular Army and the Indian Army Reserve of Officers during 1915-16 is noted below:—

Corps.	Regular Army.	Indian Army Reserve of Officers.
1	2	3
Surma Valley Light Horse	4	15
Assam Valley Light Horse	17*	23
Total	21	38

* Approximate.

SECTION 11.—MARINE.

Nil.

CHAPTER IV.

PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

SECTION 1.—AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE.

[*See* Report of the Agricultural Department, Assam, for the year ending 30th June 1916.]

Staff. 122. The post of Second Deputy Director of Agriculture, which was sanctioned in 1915, was filled by Mr. McKay, on the retirement of Rai Bhupal Chandra Basu Bahadur, who had been discharging the duties of the appointment. Mr. Meggit, the Agricultural Chemist, continued to act in place of Mr. Birt, who was still on military duty. There was a small increase in the subordinate staff from 24 to 27 officers.

Experiments. 123. Sugarcane experiments were continued at the Jorhat Farm. A large number of varieties were selected and established and as many as 92,000 sets of the better kinds of cane were distributed during the year.

The experiment at the Kamrup Sugarcane Farm of cultivating cane with steam tackle for the manufacture of refined sugar was productive of good results and over 250 acres have been planted out.

At the Karimganj Farm the experiments in the line breeding of rice, which were so seriously interfered with by the flood of 1915, were continued.

The work in connection with potatoes which has been done for many years at the Shillong Farm was of special value during the year, as there was a great demand for potato seed in those parts of the Surma Valley where the winter rice crop had been destroyed by the disastrous floods of 1915.

The Fruit Experimental Station at Shillong showed a record of satisfactory progress. Seventeen and half acres have been planted out with various kinds of fruit trees, some of which yielded excellent fruit during the year.

Demonstrations. 124. The value of manures, the qualities of different varieties of sugarcane and the cultivation of potatoes formed the subjects of the demonstration work which was undertaken.

The extension of terraced rice cultivation was encouraged in the Lushai and Abor Hills with satisfactory results.

A noticeable feature of the year was the various demonstrations made by honorary correspondents in connection with sugarcane, paddy and manures which were very successful.

Live stock. 125. The scheme for cattle-breeding on a large scale was held in abeyance as there was no money to finance it. The demand for cows bred at the Upper Shillong Farm was again considerably in excess of the supply, as the success of the cross-bred herd at the Farm is already a well-established fact.

The poultry breeding operations in the Lushai Hills were marked by continued success.

Miscellaneous. 126. Six leaflets and bulletins were issued during the year, and Rai Bahadur Bhupal Chandra Basu submitted a most valuable report on the silk industry of Assam.

SECTION 2.—CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES.

[*See* Report on the working of Co-operative Societies in Assam for the year ending the 31st March 1916 ; Statistics of British India, Part II.]

Strength. 127. During the year the number of societies rose from 301 to 315, the number of members from 16,022 to 17,981 and the working capital from Rs. 8,07,515 to Rs. 8,96,237. The number of central banks increased from 7 to 10, and of agricultural societies from 271 to 285. There was a decrease in the number of unions from 3 to 2 and of non-agricultural societies from 20 to 18. There was an increase in the number of members in all cases except in the cases of unions and non-agricultural societies.

Central banks and Unions. 128. The central banks previously so termed, and banking unions, have now been grouped together under the heading of central banks. The paid-up share capital of the banks classed as central was Rs. 49,755 as against Rs. 42,178 last year. Debenture bonds were issued as usual by the Pioneer Central Bank of Shillong. The capital thus raised within the year was Rs. 4,200 and a sum of Rs. 20,100 was

refunded as debentures matured. The profits of the central banks on the year's working amounted to Rs. 12,554. There was no increase in the number of supervising unions, but the two existing unions did useful work.

Agricultural Societies.

129. The total working capital of agricultural societies rose from Rs. 3,47,241 to Rs. 3,95,185, members' deposits rose from Rs. 79,962 to Rs. 83,794. The rate of interest on deposits remained the same as last year, *i.e.*, 6¼ per cent. Loans to the value of Rs. 1,46,801 were issued, the average amount per member being Rs. 9-4. The rate of interest varied from 12½ per cent. to 18¾ per cent. per annum. Agricultural societies made profits aggregating Rs. 22,935, the whole of which was carried to the reserve funds.

Non-agricultural Societies.

130. The total capital of non-agricultural societies inclusive of reserve funds showed an apparent decrease during the year from Rs. 2,58,307 to Rs. 1,74,077 owing to the transfer of the Sylhet Town Bank to the class of central banks. For the same reason deposits of members showed a decrease from Rs. 97,982 to Rs. 60,671 and of non-members from Rs. 73,573 to Rs. 43,486. The rate of interest on deposits was the same at last year, *i. e.*, on current deposits 4 to 4½ per cent. and on fixed deposits 5 to 9 per cent. The societies issued Rs. 72,705 in 481 loans to their members, the rate of interest being the same as it was last year. The average amount of loan per member was Rs. 44.

Reserve funds.

131. The reserve funds of central banks increased from Rs. 7,348 to Rs. 14,019 and those of agricultural societies from Rs. 49,529 to Rs. 63,255. There was an apparent decrease in the reserve funds of non-agricultural societies from Rs. 15,706 to Rs. 14,496 owing to the change in classification, referred to above, of the Sylhet Town Bank.

General.

132. The Local Administration has not yet, owing to the financial stringency consequent on the war, been able to give effect to the orders sanctioning the appointment of a combined Registrar of Co-operative Societies and Director of Industries. No considerable expansion of the co-operative movement has therefore been found possible, but existing societies are gaining in popularity and are doing useful work. A large number of the recommendations of the Committee on co-operation in India were considered in detail in relation to the conditions of Assam and were in the main accepted by the Administration. The Registrar of Co-operative Societies was instructed to give effect to them as far as practicable.

SECTION 3.—WEATHER AND CROPS.

[*See* Report on the Season and Crops of Assam for the year ending 31st March 1916; Agricultural Statistics of British India, Volume I, Appendix A.]

Weather.

133. The spring rains were heavier than usual, and though March and April were somewhat dry, the weather in May was exceptionally wet throughout the province, the total rainfall of the month being nearly double that of May in an average year. During the rainy season there was an almost unbroken succession of rainy days. Heavy precipitations occurring in June, July and August were the cause of high floods which damaged the crops on low-lying tracts in most districts, particularly in Sylhet and Cachar. The autumn and winter rains were about normal, except in the Surma Valley, where the rainfall from December to February was much below the average. The favourable conditions in certain places and in certain months of the year were not sufficient to compensate for the excessive rainfall and high floods which caused a considerable amount of water-logging in the low-lands, and adversely affected the rice and jute crops. On the whole, therefore, the season must be regarded as unfavourable in the province, and most decidedly so in the district of Sylhet.

Crops.

134. Rice is the most important crop grown in the province. It covered an area of 4,658,380 acres or about 73 per cent. of the total cropped area, and showed a decrease of 91,460 acres as compared with the preceding year. The decrease was mainly due to floods in the Surma Valley.

Maize, sugarcane, cotton and jute showed a decrease in area while oilseeds showed an increase. The decrease in the case of sugarcane was due to excessive rainfall at the time of planting. Heavy rains at the time of sowing in Nowgong and gradual restrictions imposed on *jhuming* in Sylhet were responsible for the decrease in the case of cotton. Low prices and unfavourable weather brought about a reduction in the area occupied by jute. The increase in the case of oilseeds was due to the fact that the damage done by floods to the winter-rice crop stimulated the cultivation of mustard.

135. The outturn per acre of the spring rice was estimated at 75 per cent. of the normal as compared with 100 per cent. in the preceding year. Autumn and winter-rice crops were estimated respectively at 67 and 78 per cent. of the normal against 79 and 86 per cent. in 1914-15. On the basis of these estimates, the provincial outturn of rice amounted to 1,319,625 tons, showing a decrease of 139,355 tons, *i. e.*, about 10 per cent. The decrease was due to high floods, heavy rainfall and damage by insect pests. Outturn and prices.

The outturn of rape was estimated at 70 per cent. of the normal against 85 per cent. of the previous year. The low outturn was due to drought. The outturn of sugar-cane fell from 95 per cent. to 91 per cent., and that of jute from 83 per cent. to 63 per cent. owing to floods.

Matikalai was generally cheaper than in the preceding year, while the price of mustard was also lower than in 1914-15. *Gur* was sold at exceptionally high rates, prices being much higher than in the preceding year.

136. In the Hill districts, in the Assam Valley and in Cachar the year was not unfavourable. In the large and important district of Sylhet much damage was done by flood, and, when the raiyats tried to make good their losses by the late planting of rice and by the cultivation of winter crops to an unusual extent, their efforts were frustrated by the early cessation of the rains and by an abnormal winter drought. This double calamity gave rise to a good deal of distress, and large sums of money had to be distributed in agricultural loans and gratuitous relief. Elsewhere the cultivators enjoyed a year of fairly normal prosperity. General.

SECTION 4.—FORESTS.

[*See* Progress Report of Forest Administration in the Province of Assam for 1915-16, and Statistics of British India Part IV(*b*)—Finance and Revenue.]

137. The total area of the reserved forests at the close of the year was 4,907 square miles, 385 square miles having been added and 6 square miles disforested during the year. The area of the unclassed State forests decreased by 596 square miles owing chiefly to the extension of cultivation and reservations. The area at the close of the year was 17,461 square miles. In the Western Circle 220 square miles and in the Eastern Circle 165 square miles were finally gazetted as reserved forests, while an area of 449 square miles was still in process of settlement. Area and Settlement.

In the Western Circle the principal additions were the North Cachar Hills reserve of 93 square miles and four reserves in Sylhet with an area of 58 square miles. The largest reserve made in the Eastern Circle was the Dhansiri reserve in the Nowgong district, the area of which is 107 square miles.

In the North-East Frontier Tract 6 areas comprising 50 square miles were protected under executive orders pending formal reservation under the Assam Forest Regulation.

138. No new working plans were prepared or undertaken during the year. The prescriptions of the existing working plans were, as far as possible, carried out, but the depressed state of the timber trade and the necessity for the greatest economy in view of the existing financial conditions militated against any marked changes in this direction. Fellings were in arrears, especially in the Western Range of Goalpara. The working plan of the *sâl* forests of Darrang expired during the year, and a report was submitted by the Conservator of Forests showing how far the object for which it was introduced has been attained. The future treatment of these forests is under consideration. The suggestions of the Inspector General of Forests with regard to the Jokai working plan were, to a great extent, carried out. Working plans.

In the Eastern Circle, 129 square miles of boundary survey and 521 square miles of survey with interior details were made by the Survey Department.

139. Considerable progress was made in the improvement of the Goalpara Forest tramway by the reduction of gradients and the levelling up of inequalities. Though the number of trucks was insufficient and the locomotive could not be used for a short time owing to repairs, the tramway worked at a net profit of Rs. 6,995. Communications and buildings.

One hundred and fifteen miles of new roads and paths were constructed at a cost of Rs. 14,281. A sum of Rs. 22,306 was spent on the construction of new rest houses and subordinates' quarters. This expenditure was curtailed as far as possible owing to the financial stringency. The expenditure on repairs of buildings amounted to Rs. 16,400, while Rs. 14,195 were spent on repairing roads and bridges.

Forest offences.

140. The number of cases reported during the year increased from 854 to 902, of which 320 were taken into court against 271 of the previous year. There were 253 convictions and 44 acquittals. A satisfactory feature was the absence of complaints to the effect that the courts award inadequate punishment in forest cases.

Sylviculture.

141. The policy of fire protection which had encouraged the growth of shrubs, climbers and some species of grass and thereby hindered the process of natural reproduction in the *sál* forests, was abandoned and many of the *sál* forests were burned with successful results. Proposals for the introduction of the system of cultivation of *sál* in conjunction with *jhuming* were approved as an experimental measure, but effect could not be given to them during the year.

Simul plantations were successful in the Eastern Circle, but, on the whole, the year was not one which could be regarded with satisfaction from the point of view of artificial as well as of natural reproduction.

Owing to the low price of rubber, no tapping was done in the Kulsi plantation. In the Charduar plantation, the cost of the up-keep of which amounted to Rs. 1,126, some 740 lbs. of tree rubber and 277 lbs. of mat rubber were collected and sold locally for Rs. 485. The result was very disappointing and the rubber plantations must be regarded as a failure.

Financial results.

142. Financially, the year showed a great improvement on 1914-15. The expenditure amounted to Rs. 7,26,454, and receipts to Rs. 9,92,888 so that there was a surplus of Rs. 2,66,434 as compared with a deficit of Rs. 5,137 in the previous year. The principal heads under which economies were effected were (1) communications and buildings, and (2) organization, improvement and extension of forests, while the receipts rose under (1) grazing and fodder grass and (2) elephant mahals. There was a reduction in expenditure owing to the deputation of officers of the Imperial Forest Service to the Indian Army Reserve of Officers.

General.

143. Two new forest villages were established in the districts of Cachar and Kamrup. A large number of Kukis, Santhals and Meches were admitted into the existing villages.

Elephant mahals were redistributed and grouped into different hunting areas under the new system by which each area is leased for two and then closed for eight years. The Goalpara-Bhutan elephant mahals were leased for the years 1915—1917 for Rs. 66,000. During the first season's operations 279 elephants were captured.

Samples of the grasses in the Brahmaputra Valley were sent to the Titaghur Paper Mills for test in connection with a visit of the Forest Economist for the purpose of ascertaining whether these grasses can be utilized for the production of paper pulp.

The question of grazing in the Assam Valley formed the subject of a special enquiry by an officer of the Indian Civil Service. The rate of taxation to be imposed and the management of grazing grounds were the chief questions for report. The former is still under consideration.

A new forest division comprising the Southern and Eastern Sections, North-East Frontier Tracts, was created and made a major charge under an officer of the Imperial Forest Service.

SECTION 5.—MANUFACTURES AND MINES.

Tea.

144. The number of tea gardens increased from 765 to 779 and the acreage under tea from 376,375 to 383,821 acres. About 94 per cent. of the area under tea was plucked and yielded 245,385,920 lbs. of manufactured tea. This represents an increase of about 18 per cent. on the outturn of the previous year, although no green tea was manufactured during the year. The permanent and temporary labour forces increased by 7,972 and 3,384 persons respectively.

Weather.

145. The weather was generally very favourable to the growth of tea, in spite of the unusually heavy rainfall in Cachar, Sylhet and North Lakhimpur. The rainfall was generally above the average, and in excess of that of the preceding year.

Prices.

146. Prices both in Calcutta and in London ruled considerably higher than in the previous year. The opening of new gardens, the increase in area and outturn, and the high prices are clear indications of the prosperity of the tea industry, and it is satisfactory to observe that this industry has not been adversely affected by the war. In certain districts, notably in Sylhet, Lakhimpur and Darrang, Indian capital is being more freely employed than has been the case in the past.

147. No new mining leases were issued, but one license to prospect for coal, oil, iron, slate and shales was granted to the Assam Railways and Trading Company in the district of Lakhimpur. In the Khasi and Jaintia Hills district the three licenses to prospect for gold, tin, wolfram and other allied metals which were transferred to the Khasi Hills Prospecting and Mining Syndicate were renewed for a further period of one year on payment of fees amounting to Rs. 1,117. In the district of Cachar the license to prospect for oil granted to the Badarpur Oil Company was renewed for a further period of one year. Minerals.

The revenue derived from royalties on coal and oil was Rs. 62,714 against Rs. 62,681 in 1914-15. The output of coal increased from 304,290 tons to 308,671 tons, while that of oil decreased from 4,688,547 gallons to 4,550,150 gallons. The receipts from coal mines increased by Rs. 1,123, while those from mineral oil decreased by Rs. 1,090. A sum of Rs. 1,000 was realised on account of the rent of the Mawlong coal mining leases.

In the Naga Hills the Nazira Coal Company worked the Borjan coal mine and extracted 2,872 tons of coal, the value of the total output at the pit's mouth being Rs. 8,616.

SECTION 6.—FACTORIES.

148. There were 15 factories at work in the province during the year. They were classified as follows:— Rep

Factories.	Districts.	Number.
Printing presses ...	Khasi and Jaintia Hills ...	1
Railway workshops ...	Sibsagar, Nowgong and Lakhimpur ...	3
Colliery workshop ...	Lakhimpur ...	1
Petroleum refinery ...	Ditto ...	1
Pottery ...	Ditto ...	1
Saw Mills ...	Cachar, Sibsagar, Darrang, Sylhet and Lakhimpur (4) ...	8
	Total ...	15

One printing press was closed and one saw mill established during the year.

The total average daily number of operatives employed in the province increased from 2,714 to 2,821. Of these, 2,085 were adult males, 518 adult females and 218 children against 2,087, 447 and 180, respectively, in the preceding year. Twelve of the factories were inspected during the year. No adverse comments were made by the Inspector, and no prosecutions were instituted during the year. The number of accidents was two, one being classified as serious, and the other as minor.

SECTION 7.—MARITIME TRADE.

Nil.

SECTION 8.—RAIL AND RIVER-BORNE TRADE.

149. Climatic conditions were unfavourable to cultivation. Heavy rains accompanied by successive high floods occurred in June, July and August; these caused damage to the crops in low-lying tracts in most of the districts, and particularly in Sylhet and Cachar. The provincial outturn of rice and jute was much lower than that of the previous year. General.

Though imports and exports declined in quantity from 1,01,41,830½ and 1,32,16,374 maunds in 1914-15 to 1,03,01,848 and 1,06,94,093$\frac{3}{40}$ maunds, their value rose from Rs. 8,65,63,037 and Rs. 14,80,17,143 to Rs. 9,82,39,372 and Rs. 16,01,78,478, respectively.

The value of the total trade between Assam and other provinces rose from Rs. 23,45,80,180 to Rs. 25,84,17,845.

150. The principal imports were manufactured cotton, grain, pulse, iron and steel. The total value of the imports in the case of foreign twist and yarn fell from 23·4 to 20·1 lakhs of rupees, and that in the case of foreign piece-goods rose from 138·2 to 218·4 lakhs. Imports.

There was an expansion of the import trade in husked rice, medicinal preparations, kerosine oil and salt, but the imports of unhusked rice, iron, steel, mustard oil, betelnuts, sugar, unmanufactured tobacco and manufactured wood showed a falling off.

Exports. 151. The most important article of export is tea, its value representing 81·1 per cent. of the total value of exports by rail and river. The amount exported rose from 25,26,058 maunds in 1914-15 to 28,89,593 maunds in 1915-16. The export of paddy declined in quantity from 39,45,181 to 18,78,266 maunds.

The decrease is attributable to the harvest in the Surma Valley being very poor. The export trade in timber and hides expanded while that in mustard seed, raw cotton and raw silk declined.

SECTION 9.—Frontier Trade.

Registration. 152. There was no change in the number and position of the registering stations or in the system of registration.

Trade. 153. The total value of frontier trade fell from Rs. 36,10,055 to Rs. 22,80,387. The decrease is attributable mainly to the contraction of the trade with Bhutan owing to the occurrence of a few cases of cholera in a Bhutia camp and, in a lesser degree, to the discontinuance of the registration of the forest produce brought by the Aka, Mishmi and Abor tribes.

Bhutan. 154. Imports and exports declined from Rs. 18,60,199 and Rs. 16,01,391 to Rs. 12,28,751 and Rs. 9,10,092, respectively, a decrease occurring in most of the principal commodities.

Towang and Charduar Bhutias. 155. The import trade fell from Rs. 13,224 to Rs. 11,857 and the export from Rs. 4,735 to Rs. 3,340. The smaller attendance of the Towang Bhutias at the Udalguri fair is mainly responsible for the decrease.

Akas and Daflas. 156. Imports and exports rose from Rs. 8,448 and Rs. 6,261 to Rs. 10,591 and Rs. 8,370, respectively, as these people visited the plains in larger numbers than usual.

Abors, Mishmis, etc. 157. The import trade fell slightly from Rs. 81,525 to Rs. 80,775, owing to the discontinuance of the registration of forest produce. The export trade decreased from Rs. 34,272 to Rs. 26,611, chiefly owing to the demand for opium being less than usual.

General. 158. No taxes or imposts are known to have been levied by any foreign tribe, but a duty of 10 per cent. *ad valorem* in addition to royalty is realised on musk, wax and Mishmi *titha* at Sadiya.

SECTION 10.—Public Works.

Imperial Works. 159. The expenditure under all heads amounted to Rs. 1,03,843.

Quarters for the Sergeant Major Instructors at Makum and Moriani were under construction. Certain improvements to the Doom Dooma combined post and telegraph office and new post office buildings at Nongpoh, Sunamganj and Shamshernagar and an office for the Superintendent of Post Offices at Silchar were the principal works completed.

Provincial Works, Residences. 160. Further improvements were made to Government House, Shillong, at a cost of Rs. 11,657.

Twelve new residences were completed and improvements effected to two. Eleven residences were in progress.

Administration. 161. Works completed were the forest office at Nowgong, a settlement office at Sylhet and extensions to the Sub-Deputy Collector's office at Tengakhat and the guard-house at the Dhubri treasury. An office for the Political Officer at Balipara was under construction.

Law and Justice. 162. The double munsifi at Sunamganj was completed. Works in progress were the improvements to the court house at Sunamganj and the Judge's and Deputy Commissioner's courts at Sylhet. Mortuaries were under construction at Moran, Dhakuakhana and Bordoloni.

Circuit Houses. 163. Improvements were made to the buildings at Dibrugarh, Habiganj and Maulvi Bazar.

164. Three new hostels were constructed at the Normal and High Schools at Silchar, two hostels for the Collegiate School and Cotton College, Gauhati, and one hostel for the Sylhet High School. Additions and alterations were made to the High School, Silchar, the hostels at the Jorhat and Sylhet High Schools, the Middle English School at Kanairghat and the Pine Mount School at Shillong. Other important works completed were the Arts buildings for the Cotton College and the Law College at Gauhati. Of the works in progress the most important were the new High Schools at Goalpara, Jorhat and Golaghat and compound railings and improvements to play grounds of the college and school buildings at Gauhati. Land was acquired for the Murarichand College at Sylhet. Education.

165. Works completed were the pucca walls round the Nowgong and Mangaldai Jails and certain improvements to the Shillong, Dhubri, Gauhati, Dibrugarh and North Lakhimpur Jails. The improvements to the Sylhet Jail were in progress. Jail.

166. Police buildings were constructed at Titabar, Teok, Dergaon, South Salmara, Sunamganj, Lakai and Badarpur. Thirteen other works were in progress. Police.

167. Hospitals were constructed at Champhai, Vanlaiphai and Aijal. A cholera hospital was under construction at Dhubri and certain improvements to the Tezpur Lunatic Asylum were in progress. Medical.

168. The *ganja gola* at Dibrugarh and certain improvements at the Jorhat distillery were in progress. Excise.

169. The survey school at Jhalukbari was still under construction. Land Records.

170. Materials were collected for a laboratory at Jorhat. Agriculture.

171. A sum of nearly 5 lakhs of rupees was spent on original works and over 12½ lakhs on maintenance. Communications.

Of the numerous works completed or in progress, the most important was the Lohit Valley Road in the North-East Frontier, the estimated cost of which is 26½ lakhs of rupees. This work was nearly completed.

172. Bungalows were completed at Saikhowa, Sakhai, Kobo, Pillang and Passighat. Bungalows were under construction at Gabru and Emiloni. Certain improvements were in hand to the bungalows at Tezpur, Tinsukia and Sadiya. Dâk and Inspection Bungalows.

173. The sluice gates at Nowgong and the main weir in the trout lakes at Shillong were completed. A scheme for the protection from fire of Government buildings in Shillong was in progress. Miscellaneous Public Improvements.

174. Works completed were the dispensary buildings at Gauhati, Tezpur, Golaghat, Dibrugarh and Silghat and the improvements to the Digli Pukri tank at Gauhati. Works in progress were the Dhubri and Golaghat water-works, the dispensary buildings at Karimganj and certain buildings for the aided high school at Sunamganj. Contribution Works.

The total expenditure to the end of the year on Local Board "special programme" projects which have been handed over to the Public Works Department for execution amounted to Rs. 11,61,783. The total estimated cost of these projects is Rs. 13,28,244.

175. Certain bandalling operations were undertaken in the Dehing, Desang and Kalang rivers and snags were removed from the Ranganadi river. The snag boat was still under construction at the Kidderpur Docks. Minor Works and Navigation.

176. No addition was made during the year to the open mileage, which remained at 914·07. Railways.

The hill section of the Assam-Bengal Railway was seriously damaged by floods and is under restoration at an estimated cost of 28 lakhs of rupees. The construction of the Chapparmukh-Silghat and the Katakhal-Lalabazar railways, on branch line terms, was sanctioned and work started during this year.

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CHAPTER V.

REVENUE AND FINANCE.

A.—GROSS REVENUE.

177. The receipts and charges of the province are shown in the tables below :—

Receipts during 1915-16.

Heads of Account.	Imperial.	Provincial.	Total.
1	2	3	4
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
A.—Principal Heads of Revenue—			
I.—Land Revenue	38,92,529	39,23,924	78,16,453
II.—Opium	5,35,523	...	5,35,523
III.—Salt	840	...	840
IV.—Stamps	7,12,177	7,12,177	14,24,354
V.—Excise	...	54,63,211	54,63,211
VI.—Provincial Rates	...	11,446	11,446
VIII.—Income-tax	2,30,080	2,30,080	4,60,160
IX.—Forest	...	10,55,052	10,55,052
X.—Registration	...	1,13,116	1,13,116
XI.—Tributes	50,100	...	50,100
Total A.—Principal Heads of Revenue ...	54,21,249	1,15,09,006	1,69,30,255
B.—Interest—			
XII.—Interest	...	43,885	43,885
D.—Receipts by Civil Departments—			
XVIA.—Law and Justice—Courts of Law	...	1,25,971	1,25,971
XVIB.—Law and Justice—Jails ...	...	81,047	81,047
XVII.—Police	...	1,22,825	1,22,825
XVIII.—Ports and Pilotage	...	38	38
XIX.—Education	...	1,86,780	1,86,780
XX.—Medical	...	27,255	27,255
XXIA.—Agriculture	...	14,582	14,582
XXIB.—Scientific and Miscellaneous Departments.	...	11,409	11,409
Total D.—Receipts by Civil Departments ...	...	5,69,907	5,69,907
E.—Miscellaneous Civil Receipts—			
XXII.—Receipts in aid of Superannuation...	32,171	6,232	38,403
XXIII.—Stationery and Printing ...	375	5,511	5,886
XXV.—Miscellaneous	4,994	43,674	48,668
Total E.—Miscellaneous Civil Receipts ...	37,540	55,417	92,957
H.—Railways—			
XXVI.—State Railway (Gross Receipts) ...	...	1,53,781	1,53,781
Deduct—Working—Expenses ...	...	1,01,834	1,01,834
Net Railway Receipts ...	...	51,947	51,947
J.—Irrigation—			
XXX.—Minor Works and Navigation ...	...	...	...
K.—Other Public Works—			
XXXI.—Civil Works (Civil) ...	...	70,060	70,060
XXXI.—Civil Works (Public Works) ...	1,501	99,495	1,00,996
Total K.—Other Public Works ...	1,501	1,69,555	1,71,056
Military Receipts—			
XXXIV.—Military Works	3,324	...	3,324
Transfer between Imperial and Provincial ...	—18,89,254	+18,89,254	...
Grand total ...	35,74,360	1,42,88,971	1,78,63,331

Expenditure during 1915-16.

Heads of Account.	Imperial.	Provincial.	Total.
1	2	3	4
A.—Direct Demands on the Revenue—	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Refunds and Drawbacks	13,830	35,485	49,315
2. Assignments and Compensations ...	36,716	17,520	54,236
3. Land Revenue	...	16,37,550	16,37,550
5. Salt	851	...	851
6. Stamps	24,054	24,054	48,108
7. Excise	...	1,22,242	1,22,242
8. Provincial Rates	...	...	...
10. Income-tax	2,261	2,261	4,522
11. Forest	...	7,55,214	7,55,214
12. Registration	...	65,051	65,051
Total A.—Direct Demands, etc. ...	77,712	26,59,377	27,37,089
B.—Interest—			
13. Interest on ordinary Debt... ...	...	68,018	68,018
14. „ „ other obligations. { Civil ...	32,051	...	32,051
{ Public Works ...	...	...	...
Total B.—Interest	32,051	68,018	1,00,069
D.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments—			
18. General Administration	1,60,849	6,12,443	7,73,292
19A. Law and Justice—Courts of Law ...	...	10,35,202	10,35,202
19B. Law and Justice—Jails	...	3,29,022	3,29,022
20. Police	...	23,65,730	23,65,730
21. Ports and Pilotage	...	61,619	61,619
22. Education	...	14,13,758	14,13,758
23. Ecclesiastical	22,586	...	22,586
24. Medical	...	6,67,714	6,67,714
25. Political	...	5,68,221	5,68,221
26A. Agriculture	...	2,33,082	2,33,082
26B. Scientific and Miscellaneous Departments.	...	87,599	87,599
Total D.—Salaries and Expenses, etc. ...	1,83,435	73,74,390	75,57,825
E.—Miscellaneous—			
27. Territorial and Political Pensions ...	7,343	...	7,343
29. Superannuation Allowances and Pensions	...	3,35,677	3,35,677
30. Stationery and Printing	650	1,78,528	1,79,178
32. Miscellaneous	21,276	5,22,430	5,43,706
Total E.—Miscellaneous	29,269	10,36,635	10,65,904
H.—Railway Revenue Accounts—			
40. Subsidized Companies	...	5,112	5,112
41. Miscellaneous Railway Expenditure ...	...	12,424	12,424
Total H.—Railways	...	17,536	17,536
J.—Irrigation—			
43. Minor Works and Navigation. { Civil ...	...	30	30
{ Public Works...	...	95,816	95,816
Total J.—Irrigation	...	95,846	95,846
K.—Other Public Works—			
44. Construction of Railways	...	18,950	18,950
45. Civil Works { Civil	...	3,98,812	3,98,812
{ Public Works ...	47,139	35,70,507	36,17,646
Total K.—Other Public Works ...	47,139	39,88,269	40,35,408
L.—Military Works Services—			
47. Military Works { Ordinary ...	34,042	...	34,042
{ Special ...	22,662	...	22,662
Total L.—Military Works Services ...	56,704	...	56,704
Grand total ...	4,26,310	1,52,40,471	1,56,66,381

Abstracts of Receipts and Expenditure during 1915-16.

Heads.	1914-15.			1915-16.			1915-16 compared with 1914-15.			
	Receipts.	Expenditure.	Net receipts +. Net expenditure −.	Receipts.	Expenditure.	Net receipts +. Net expenditure −.	Increase of Revenue.	Decrease of Revenue.	Increase of Expenditure.	Decrease of Expenditure.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
I. Principal Heads of Revenue	1,63,32,571	27,81,365	+1,35,51,206	1,69,30,255	27,37,089	+1,41,93,166	5,97,684	...	...	44,276
II. Departmental Heads— Interest	66,896	66,000	+896	43,885	1,00,069	−56,184	...	23,011	34,069	...
Civil Departments ...	5,88,090	77,55,261	−71,67,171	5,69,907	75,57,825	−69,87,918	...	18,183	...	1,97,436
Miscellaneous	75,720	9,20,537	−8,44,817	92,957	10,65,904	−9,72,947	17,237	...	1,45,367	...
Famine Relief and Insurance.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Railway Revenue Accounts...	436	5,112	−4,676	51,947	17,536	+34,411	51,511	...	12,424	...
Irrigation	...	67,700	−67,700	...	95,846	−95,846	...	...	28,146	...
Other Public Works ...	1,75,467	55,08,926	−53,33,459	1,71,056	40,35,408	−38,64,352	...	4,411	...	14,73,518
Military Works Services ...	5,590	53,008	−47,418	3,324	56,704	−53,380	...	2,266	3,696	...
Total Departmental Heads ...	9,12,199	1,43,76,544	−1,34,64,345	29,33,076	1,29,29,292	−1,19,96,216	68,748	47,871	2,23,702	16,70,954
Grand total	1,72,44,770	1,71,57,909	+86,361	1,78,63,331	1,56,66,381	+21,96,950	6,66,432	47,871	2,23,702	17,15,230

Land Revenue.

178. The expenditure of the year compares as follows with that of 1914-15 :—

Minor heads.	1915-16 compared with 1914-15.		1915-16 compared with budget estimate.	
	Increase.	Decrease.	Increase.	Decrease.
1	2	3	4	5
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Charges of District Administration ...	15,000	...	...	68,000
2. Management of Government Estates ...	...	5,000	...	...
3. Charges on account of Land Revenue Collections	79,000	...	...	16,000
4. Charges on account of Fishery Collections ...	...	...	...	...
5. Survey and Settlement	82,000	...	...	33,000
6. Land Records	...	12,000	3,000	...
7. Allowances to District and Village Officers ...	1,000	...	1,000	...

The increase under "Charges of District Administration" was due to the stoppage of leave of superior officers during the first few months of the year. Commission on collections increased owing partly to the payment of arrears of 1914-15 and partly to the better collection of revenue. The increase under "Survey and Settlement" is due to larger expenditure on settlement operations in Sylhet and Cachar and to the fact that the expenditure in 1914-15 was considerably reduced by the adjustment of recoverable charges of 1913-14. Smaller outlay on construction of quarters for mandals accounts for the decrease under "Land Records."

General administration.

179. The details by minor heads of actual and estimated expenditure under this head are shown in round figures in the following table :—

Minor heads.	Actuals, 1914-15.	Budget, 1915-16.	Actuals, 1915-16.	Comparison with actuals, 1914-15.	Comparison with budget, 1915-16.
1	2	3	4	5	6
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Salary of Chief Commissioner	55,000	58,000	58,000	+ 3,000	...
2. Staff and household of Chief Commissioner ...	37,000	38,000	35,000	— 2,000	— 3,000
3. Expenditure from Contract Allowances, etc. ...	5,000	7,000	7,000	+ 2,000	...
4. Tour charges	18,000	20,000	14,000	— 4,000	— 6,000
5. Legislative Council	11,000	12,000	10,000	— 1,000	— 2,000
6. Civil Secretariat	2,22,000	1,97,000	2,10,000	—12,000	+13,000
7. Commissioners	1,41,000	1,96,000	1,66,000	+25,000	—30,000
8. Civil Offices of Accounts and Audit—					
(a) Imperial	1,52,000	1,60,000	1,61,000	+ 9,000	+ 1,000
(b) Provincial	22,000	27,000	24,000	+ 2,000	— 3,000
9. Inspector General of Registration and Commissioner of Excise, etc.	45,000	41,000	41,000	— 4,000	...
10. Director of Land Records and Agriculture ...	50,000	49,000	47,000	— 3,000	— 2,000
Total ...	7,58,000	8,05,000	7,73,000	+15,000	—32,000

The decrease under "Secretariat" as compared with the previous year's actuals was due to smaller expenditure on salaries of special officers, and the excess over the budget was due partly to the absence of provision for acting allowances of Secretaries and partly to increased expenditure on establishment and travelling allowance. The increase under "Commissioners" as compared with the actuals of 1914-15 was due to larger outlay on the purchase and repair of steamers. The decrease as compared with the budget was due to the inability of the dockyard authorities to spend up to the budget provision for the construction of a launch for the Commissioner, Surma Valley and Hill Districts.

B.—IMPERIAL REVENUE AND FINANCE.

SECTION 1.—LAND REVENUE.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1915-16.]

Land Revenue.

180. The total ordinary land revenue demand rose from Rs. 75,74,477 to Rs. 78,77,499, of which Rs. 72,40,088 or 91·90 per cent. were collected and Rs. 16,176 remitted, leaving a net outstanding balance of Rs. 6,18,847 at the close of the year. The total demand on account of miscellaneous land revenue rose from Rs. 6,67,751 to Rs. 7,20,092, of which Rs. 6,92,931 or 96·23 per cent. were collected, Rs. 4,077 remitted and Rs. 23,084 remained outstanding.

SECTION 2.—SOURCES OF REVENUE OTHER THAN LAND REVENUE.

Salt.

181. The only salt warehouse in the Province is situated at Ajmiriganj in the district of Sylhet. The quantity of salt imported during the year amounted to 30,000 maunds against 47,000 maunds in the previous year, and 34,863 maunds were cleared against 45,526 maunds in 1914-15. The average wholesale and retail prices were Rs. 2-15-7 and Rs. 3-4-0 per maund, the figures for the previous year being Rs. 2-3-6 and Rs. 3-0-0, respectively. The net revenue fell from Rs. 50,945 to Rs. 29,815.

Excise receipts and charges.

182. The revenue demand under all heads amounted to Rs. 53,94,136 against Rs. 53,79,703 in the preceding year, showing an increase of 2 per cent. The Surma Valley contributed the whole increase, the Assam Valley showing a decrease of Rs. 11,770. The license fees under the main heads rose by Rs. 1,65,760 or 9·3 per

cent., while duty fell by Rs. 1,45,904 or 4·2 per cent. The increase in license fees was due to keen competition, attributable to the weakening of monopolies. Various restrictive measures introduced during the year, combined with natural calamities and the depression of trade, brought about a fall in the consumption of opium, *ganja* and country spirit and a consequent decrease in duty. Of the total demand recoverable during the year, 99·96 per cent. was realised, the outstanding balance being Rs. 220.

The total expenditure of the department fell from Rs. 1,37,154 to Rs. 1,29,550, representing 2·38 per cent. of the total receipts against 2·53 per cent. in the previous year. The expenditure increased under "Establishment" and "Travelling allowance," but the increase was more than counterbalanced by decreases under "Rewards," "Contingencies" and "Refunds."

Country spirit.

183. The consumption of country spirit fell by 23·1 per cent. but the receipts rose from Rs. 15,09,056 to Rs. 15,24,402 or by 1·01 per cent. The decrease in consumption was shared by all the districts, and was due partly to the enhancement of the duty from Rs. 3-2-0 to Rs. 3-12-0 per L. P. gallon, to the increase of the minimum and maximum retail prices from annas six and eight to annas eight and ten, respectively, and to the curtailment of the hours of sale by two hours, and partly to the abnormal floods and poor harvests and the consequent depression of trade. The incidence of taxation per head of population was highest in the districts of Lakhimpur (Re. 1-1-1), the Naga Hills (0-11-5) and Sibsagar (0-9-3). There was no change in the area in which the outstill system was in force. Samples of the spirit manufactured at Jorhat have been regularly submitted to the Customs and Excise Chemist, Calcutta, and, throughout the year under report, as in previous years, the samples have been declared to be of excellent quality and free from any deleterious substance.

Ganja.

184. Although the number of retail licenses was reduced from 236 to 234 and the consumption of *ganja* fell from 756 maunds to 708 maunds, the revenue rose owing to favourable settlements from Rs. 8,22,854 to Rs. 8,25,812.

Opium.

185. The consumption of opium fell by 4·4 per cent. but the revenue rose from Rs. 30,53,498 to Rs. 30,53,933. There was an increase of Rs. 73,194 in license fees, while duty decreased by Rs. 72,759. The increase in license fees may be attributed to keener competition, whilst the decrease in duty was due to higher retail prices and the high cost of food-grains, which left the consuming classes little margin for luxuries.

General.

186. Minimum retail prices were fixed for *ganja* and opium, and the minimum and maximum retail prices of 60 U. P. country spirit were increased in all the plain districts. The duty on distillery spirit was raised from Rs. 3-2-0 to Rs. 3-12-0 per L. P. gallon whilst the cost price paid by the vendor to the contractor was reduced from Re. 1-13-0 to Re. 1-9-0 per gallon. The hours of sale at all excise shops were curtailed by two hours. The policy of reducing the number of stills in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and enhancing the still fees was systematically carried out. On account of the increase in the cost price of opium, the treasury price of the drug has been raised from the 1st April 1916 by Rs. 3 a seer throughout the province. Local public opinion was freely consulted on the proposed sites of new shops and the alteration of sites of existing shops; and the teaching of temperance has been introduced into the curriculum for boys in vernacular schools. The committee appointed to consider the question of the location of the Assam Distillery has recommended that the distillery at Jorhat be closed and that liquor be obtained from a private distillery. The recommendations of the committee are under consideration. Effect has been given to an experimental arrangement with the Hill Tippera authorities limiting the number of liquor shops within three miles of the border, but it is too early to judge of its success. The position on the Bhutan border is still unsatisfactory, and a preventive patrol party has been appointed to guard the border.

Stamps.

187. Receipts under the Stamp and Court-fees Acts fell from Rs. 14,10,511 to Rs. 14,03,075 and the charges from Rs. 41,256 to Rs. 40,709. The revenue derived from the sale of judicial stamps increased by Rs. 3,908 but there was a fall of Rs. 11,344 in that derived from non-judicial stamps, and there was consequently a net decrease of Rs. 7,436. In the Assam Valley Districts there was an increase in revenue, but the Surma Valley Districts showed a considerable fall due probably to the unfavourable agricultural conditions following on the severe floods which occurred in that Valley. There were 352 stamp vendors against 359 in the preceding year, and the amount of discount earned fell from Rs. 29,816 to Rs. 29,009. Seven prosecutions were instituted, six in the Surma Valley Districts and one in the Assam Valley Districts and Rs. 70 were realised in fines. Forty-four applications were made to the Collector for probate and letters of administration against 38 in the previous year.

188. Income-tax receipts increased from Rs. 4,60,408 in 1914-15 to Rs. 4,62,793. The number of assessees and the final demand, excluding the tax on salaries of Government officials and on interest on securities, were 5,509 and Rs. 3,83,960 against 5,352 and Rs. 3,72,978, respectively, in the previous year. Income-tax.

189. SECTION 3.—PROVINCIAL FINANCE.

Year.	Opening balance.	Receipts.	Expenditure.	Closing balance.
1	2	3	4	5
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1914-15	55,88,802	1,40,87,266	1,67,27,190	29,48,878
1915-16	29,48,878	1,42,88,971	1,52,40,071	19,97,778

The budget estimate for 1914-15 provided for an opening balance of Rs. 53,85,000, receipts amounting to Rs. 1,51,98,000, expenditure amounting to Rs. 1,74,19,000 and a closing balance of Rs. 31,64,000.

Provincial receipts were worse than the budget by Rs. 7,18,000. The reduction of expenditure by Rs. 2,41,000 on account of the North-East Frontier, which is met from an annual contribution from Imperial revenues, and the increase of the provincial assignment by Rs. 81,000 for the printing of forms for Assam by the Government of Bengal, were responsible for a corresponding decline in revenue. The actual provincial revenue thus fell short of the budget estimate by Rs. 4,06,000. The decrease, which was shared by most of the important revenue heads, was due partly to the abnormal floods in certain parts of the province and partly to the depressing effects of the war. Receipts.

The expenditure was lower than the budget estimate by Rs. 8,67,000 and this was due mainly to rigid curtailment of expenditure and to savings in the provision for salaries of officers. The budget provided for the full sanctioned scale of officers, in view of their recall to duty and of the restrictions imposed on their leave. Owing, however, to the partial removal of the embargo on leave, and to certain officers obtaining commissions in the Indian Army Reserve of Officers, there was a large decrease in expenditure under Salaries. Expenditure.

The opening balance of Rs. 29,48,878 included the following assignments given by the Government of India for special purposes :— Assignment.

	Rs.
Education	6,91,000
Sanitation	47,000
Police	1,90,000
Development of the Province	5,50,000
Discretionary grant...	5,50,000
Total	20,28,000

Further recurring assignments of Rs. 3,98,000 and Rs. 50,000 were received during the year for Education and Sanitation, respectively.

Out of these assignments, aggregating Rs. 24,76,000, Rs. 8,92,000 were spent during the year, leaving a balance of Rs. 15,84,000.

SECTION 4.—LOCAL FUNDS.

190. The following statements show the receipts and charges of the year of those Local Funds of which an account is submitted to Government :—

A

Statement showing the income, expenditure and balance of Local Boards in Assam during 1915-16.

Serial No.	Names of Local Boards.	Opening Balance.	Receipts.	Total.	Payments.	Closing Balance.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1	Silchar	38,095 4 2	1,34,004 1 7	1,72,099 5 9	1,56,567 0 2	15,532 5 7
2	Hailakandi ...	28,902 3 5	66,963 5 6	95,865 8 11	71,326 7 6	24,539 1 5
3	Tezpur	47,622 11 9	1,00,612 0 4	1,48,234 12 1	1,18,104 0 7	30,130 11 6
4	Mangaldai ...	28,684 4 10	81,086 12 11	1,09,771 1 9	78,817 11 7	30,953 6 2
5	Dhubri	72,010 11 0	1,58,485 6 8	2,30,496 1 8	1,54,298 10 1	76,197 7 7
6	Goalpara	46,610 13 7	67,939 15 1	1,14,550 12 8	91,052 13 10	23,497 14 10
7	Gauhati	23,748 11 8	1,58,113 3 4	1,81,861 15 0	1,53,218 7 0	28,643 8 0
8	Barpeta	9,993 5 11	48,292 6 3	58,285 12 2	53,734 9 6	4,551 2 8
9	Dibrugarh ...	16,718 5 9	1,37,132 10 9	1,53,851 0 6	1,29,080 13 7	24,770 2 11
10	North Lakhimpur ...	18,088 6 10	62,747 4 5	80,835 11 3	60,263 11 3	20,572 0 0
11	Nowgong	37,317 0 7	1,01,168 13 4	1,38,485 13 11	1,21,337 8 10	17,148 5 1
12	Sibsagar	1,00,030 8 0	1,16,099 6 7	2,16,129 14 7	1,58,201 12 4	57,928 2 3
13	Jorhat	50,609 1 7(a)	1,07,988 12 8	1,58,597 14 3	1,17,380 9 7	41,217 4 8
14	Golaghat	37,907 0 10	74,241 7 9	1,12,148 8 7	87,410 9 11	24,737 14 8
15	North Sylhet ...	22,327 13 7	1,41,939 6 5	1,64,267 4 0	1,58,559 11 2	5,707 8 10
16	Karimganj ...	15,953 3 5	1,39,956 7 4	1,46,909 10 9	1,24,066 2 9	22,843 8 0
17	Sunamganj ...	20,233 9 11	1,38,905 2 2	1,59,138 12 1	1,45,675 6 4	13,463 5 9
18	South Sylhet ...	12,763 11 3	1,20,829 5 3	1,33,593 0 6	1,22,437 8 1	11,155 8 5
19	Habiganj	55,284 8 0	1,46,454 3 4	2,01,738 11 4	1,71,953 2 9	29,785 8 7
	Total ...	6,82,901 8 1	20,93,960 3 8	20,76,861 11 9	22,73,486 12 10	5,03,374 14 11

(a) Difference of Rs. 353 as compared with the closing balance reported for 1914-15 is due to subsequent adjustments.

B

Statement showing the income, expenditure and balance of Municipalities and Unions in Assam during 1915-16.

Serial No.	Names of Municipalities or Unions.	Opening balance.	Receipts.	Total.	Payments.	Closing balance.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1	Silchar	1,06,941 10 7	60,892 1 0	1,67,833 11 7	86,481 1 9	81,352 9 10
2	Hailakandi	5,775 4 1	5,095 15 3	10,871 3 4	7,126 11 8	3,744 7 8
3	Tezpur	68,889 1 1	76,410 8 2	1,45,299 9 3	26,097 4 8	1,19,202 4 7
4	Mangaldai	3,450 11 8	3,471 14 1	6,922 9 9	4,986 5 11	1,936 3 10
5	Dhubri	12,428 7 6	25,135 0 1	37,563 7 7	28,302 6 6	9,261 1 1
6	Goalpara	1,782 10 5	12,556 2 8	14,338 13 1	12,326 4 6	2,012 8 7
7	Gauhati	14,332 2 0	75 457 11 10	89,789 13 10	85,336 14 1	4,452 15 9
8	Barpeta	5,799 4 10	16,493 15 0	22,293 3 10	19,085 7 3	3,207 12 7
9	Shillong	11,151 7 10	84,606 12 2	95,758 4 0	89,740 4 8	6,017 15 4
10	Dibrugarh	8,699 8 1	56,268 3 9	64,967 11 10	60,208 9 4	4,759 2 6
11	North Lakhimpur	4,006 4 7	5,463 3 7	9,469 8 2	3,716 7 10	5,753 0 4
12	Nowgong	8,409 8 6	18,443 8 10	26,853 1 4	20,144 5 0	6,708 12 4
13	Jorhat	2,937 4 9	25,736 15 10	28,674 4 7	24,520 13 2	4,153 7 5
14	Sibsagar	8,398 9 10	18,644 1 3	27,042 11 1	21,170 13 7	5,871 13 6
15	Golaghat	8,082 6 6	9,010 4 8	17,092 11 2	12,626 3 10	4,466 7 4
16	Nazira	8,559 9 5	4,396 6 0	12,935 15 5	5,160 11 1	7,775 4 4
17	North Sylhet	1,37,880 12 2	28,149 3 9	1,66,029 15 11	49,269 3 2	1,16,760 12 9
18	Habiganj	12,315 8 8	12,421 15 7	24,737 8 3	17,434 4 9	7,303 3 6
19	Karimganj	6,607 5 10	14,626 1 4	21,233 7 2	15,562 2 7	5,671 4 7
20	Sunamganj	7,858 8 11	5,946 3 3	13,804 12 2	7,763 8 1	6,041 4 1
21	South Sylhet	2,369 12 6	7,334 4 0	9,704 0 6	7,548 5 1	2,155 11 5
	Total	46,655 15 9	5,66,560 8 1	10,13,216 7 10	6,04,608 4 6	4,08,608 3 4

C

Statement showing the income, expenditure, and balance of Town and Bazar Funds in Assam during 1915-16.

Serial No.	Name of the Fund.	Opening balance.	Receipts.	Total.	Payments.	Closing balance.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1	North Cachar Hills Bazar Fund ...	2,077 4 0	8,407 11 9	10,484 15 9	6,605 2 6	3,879 13 3
2	Jowai Bazar Fund	446 4 4	641 15 0	1,088 3 4	908 15 10	179 3 6
3	Imphal Town Fund	...	10,373 2 10	10,373 2 10	9,168 5 1	1,204 13 9
	Total	2,523 8 4	19,422 13 7	21,946 5 11	16,682 7 5	5,263 14 6

D

Statement showing the income, expenditure, and balance of Cantonment Funds, Chaukidari Reward Funds and Assam Williamson Education Fund during 1915-16.

Name of funds.	Opening balance.	Receipts.	Total.	Payment.	Closing balance.
1	2	3	4	5	6
(a) CANTONMENTS FUNDS.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1. Khasi and Jaintia Hills ...	1,823 11 9	14,564 2 2	16,387 13 11	14,499 8 3	1,888 5 8
2. Lakhimpur...	634 0 3	2,640 8 0	3,274 8 3	2,406 4 8	868 3 7
Total	2,457 12 0	17,204 10 2	19,662 6 2	16,905 12 11	2,756 9 3
(b) DISTRICT CHAUKIDARI REWARD FUNDS.					
Cachar	570 14 0	1,076 2 9	1,647 0 9	945 0 0	702 0 9
Goalpara	11,080 2 7(*)	700 3 9	11,780 6 4	514 4 0	11,266 2 4
Sylhet	9,916 4 7	4,163 12 3	14,080 0 10	3,489 8 10	10,590 8 0
Total	21,567 5 2	5,940 2 9	27,507 7 11	4,948 12 10	22,558 11 1
(c) ASSAM WILLIAMSON EDUCATION FUND.	1,775 5 2	4,514 2 10	6,289 8 0	5,480 3 10	809 4 2

(*) Difference of Rs. 450 as compared with the closing balance reported for 1914-15 is due to subsequent corrections.

SECTION 5.—LOCAL RATES.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1915-16.]

191. The current demand rose from Rs. 7,96,673 to Rs. 8,05,345, the local rates in the Assam Valley expanding with the land revenue. There was a falling off in collections, only 83·92 per cent. of the demand being realised as against 89·29 per cent. in the preceding year. Of the total outstanding balance of Rs. 1,29,444, the district of Sylhet alone was responsible for Rs. 1,11,971, the disastrous floods rendering the collection of local rates as difficult as the collection of land revenue. 98·38 per cent. of arrears were collected as against 99·15 per cent. in the preceding year. Remissions amounted to Rs. 14 only.

SECTION 6.—EDUCATIONAL CESSES.

Nil.

SECTION 7.—MUNICIPAL REVENUES.

192. The subject of Municipal income and expenditure is discussed in Section 8, Chapter III of this Report.

CHAPTER VI.

VITAL STATISTICS AND MEDICAL SERVICE.

SECTION 1.—Vital Statistics.

General. 193. The provincial vital statistics are based on a population of 6,051,507 in the plains districts. The birth-rate during the year was 33·60 per mille as compared with 32·94 in the previous year. The year was unhealthy owing to heavy floods, which induced unfavourable climatic conditions. The death-rate per mille rose from 24·66 in 1914 to 30·86 in 1915. The excess of the birth-rate over the death-rate fell from 8·28 to 2·74 per mille.

In tea estates the birth and death-rates rose from 24·54 and 21·93 per mille in 1914 to 26·27 and 26·47 per mille, respectively. The number of deaths exceeded the number of births in all districts except Cachar and Sylhet.

The ratio of mortality from the chief diseases was 15·16 from fever, 4·46 from cholera and 2·66 from dysentery and diarrhœa against 13·73, 2·94 and 2·45, respectively, in the preceding decennium.

Registration. 194. The appointment of the newly-created Sanitary Inspectors as Registrars of Births and Deaths in the larger towns has resulted in more complete registration in urban areas. The question of the improvement of rural registration was considered, but was found impracticable for financial and other reasons. It is hoped that a solution of this problem will eventually be found in village organisation and the utilisation of Village Authorities in the registration of vital statistics.

Hill districts. 195. Vital statistics recorded in hill districts are given in the following table :—

Districts.	Birth-rate.		Death-rate.	
	1914.	1915.	1914.	1915.
1	2	3	4	5
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	25·18	24·76	18·34	18·38
Naga Hills	27·65	26·36	18·98	15·63
Lushai Hills	40·91	46·27	32·84	29·45
Garo Hills	30·78	26·07	23·37	27·94

SECTION 2.—Immigration and Labour Inspection.

[*See* Resolution on Immigrant Labour in Assam for the year 1915-16.]

Legislation. 196. The principal events of the year were the formation of the Assam Labour Board under the provisions of the Assam Labour and Emigration (Amendment) Act (VIII of 1915), the abolition of the system of recruitment by contractors with effect from the 1st July 1915, and the withdrawal of the labour districts provisions of Act VI of 1901 with effect from the same date. The Labour Board did much useful work in connection with the supervision of recruitment.

Immigration. 197. The number of immigrants during the year under report, *viz.*, 110,376, was very considerably in excess of the numbers of any of the preceding four years. The large increase reflects the prosperous condition of the tea industry, and favourable conditions in the recruiting districts. The number of immigrants indentured under Act VI of 1901, before the orders abolishing contracts came into force, was 579. The bulk of the immigrants came from the plains of Bengal, the United Provinces and Bihar, while there was a fall in the number of arrivals from the Central Provinces, and a small increase in the number from Madras. The health of the immigrants in transit was not as satisfactory as usual, the number of deaths, the majority of which were due to cholera, being 114. Considering however, the unusually large number of immigrants, the unhealthy character of the year, and the fact that a large number of immigrants came from districts affected by scarcity, the mortality was not unduly high.

Immigrant population. 198. The total strength of the labour force at the end of the year was 9,53,127 against 8,79,330 in the preceding year, the number of adults having contracts under Act VI of 1901 being only 5,062 or 0·8 per cent. of the total adult labourers. The recorded birth-rate per mille on the total coolie population and that on the adult female population were lower than the corresponding figures of the preceding year, being 23·7 and 82·0 against 25·9 and 88·8, respectively; while the death-rate per mille of the total labour force was higher than in the previous year, being 27·4 against 24·2

in 1914-15. The total number of deaths was 25,151; of these, 9,235 were due to diarrhœa, dysentery and anchylostomiasis, while respiratory diseases were responsible for 2,436.

The number of complaints of fraudulent and irregular recruitment fell from 81 to 76, of which 24 were found on investigation to be true. Only one complaint of ill-treatment, which was found to be a trivial one, was instituted by coolies against their employers. The numbers of cases of unlawful assembly or rioting and assault instituted by managers against coolies show a satisfactory decrease from 10 and 5 to 4 and 1, respectively, during the year under report. In these cases 47 persons were sent to prison.

The working of Act XIII of 1859 was again reported to be satisfactory. Free labourers and Act VI labourers whose contracts have expired usually enter into agreements under this Act on account of the advances which they receive, but it is only in a few cases that managers resort to the courts to enforce the fulfilment of the terms of the agreements. The relations between planters and the neighbouring villagers were generally satisfactory. The area of Government land settled with time-expired coolies was 2,21,161 acres at the close of the year, against 2,13,850 of the preceding year, and the area held by such coolies as sub-tenants was 30,798 acres. The area of Government land settled with managers on special nine years' leases, to enable them to provide their coolies with cultivation, was 15,803 acres.

SECTION 3.—CHARITABLE DISPENSARIES.

[*See* Dispensary Returns of the Province of Assam, 1915.]

Dispensaries.

199. The number of hospitals and dispensaries in the province rose from 204 in 1914 to 206 in 1915. Of these, 121 were supported by Local Bodies, 17 by private persons, and 68 by the State. Eleven new institutions were opened during the year, but 9 had to be closed, owing to the deputation of a number of Sub-Assistant Surgeons to military duty.

The number of patients treated fell from 1,710,036 in 1914 to 1,619,294 in 1915, the decrease of 90,742 being due to the closure, owing to want of officers of most of the travelling dispensaries opened in 1914, owing to the withdrawal of medical officers for military duties.

The total number of in-patients treated was 13,389.

The income at the disposal of State-Public, Local Fund and Private-aided dispensaries was Rs. 5,46,989, of which Rs. 2,22,391 or 40·66 per cent. was contributed by Government. The total expenditure during the year was Rs. 4,13,826 against Rs. 4,60,997 in the preceding year. The decrease in expenditure was due to the closure of a number of travelling dispensaries, owing to the withdrawal of medical officers for military duties.

The total number of inspections made during the year was 458 against 483 in 1914.

Leper Asylum.

200. In the Leper Asylum at Sylhet 79 patients were under treatment during the year. Of these, 7 were discharged relieved, 13 discharged otherwise, 12 absconded, 11 died and 36 remained at the close of the year. The total expenditure excluding establishment charges was Rs. 3,754-8-11 against Rs. 3,546 in the previous year. The increase in expenditure was due to the increased price of food-stuffs.

In the Kohima Leper Hospital 25 patients were under treatment, of whom 7 were discharged unrelieved and 18 remained at the close of the year. The total expenditure excluding establishment charges was Rs. 1,323.

Treatment with "Antileprol" and "Leprolin" was tried in both the institutions. The new methods of treatment adopted by Dr. Heiser and Lieutenant-Colonel L. Rogers are also being tried side by side in the Sylhet Leper Asylum.

SECTION 4.—LUNATIC ASYLUM.

[*See* Statistical Returns of the Lunatic Asylum in Assam for the year 1915.]

Population.

201. The number of admissions to the Asylum is steadily increasing and 127 patients were admitted during the year. The districts of Sylhet, Sibsagar and Kamrup furnished the largest numbers. Thirty two were discharged cured, 4 made over to their friends as "mentally-improved," 1 escaped, 2 committed suicide and 27 died, leaving 352 inmates in the Asylum at the close of the year, of whom 115 were criminal lunatics. The largest number of insanes were, as usual, among cultivators and tea-garden coolies between 20 and 40 years of age.

Predisposing causes were known in 53 cases and exciting causes in 47. In 12 cases both the predisposing and exciting causes were known. No cause was assigned in 33 cases. The majority of those admitted were suffering from mania (77) and melancholia (24).

Health.

202. The number of admissions to hospital rose from 122 to 123 and the daily average sick from 51·56 to 60·46. The number of deaths was larger than in 1914, having increased from 17 to 29; and the death-rate per cent. on the average strength was 8·92. Deaths from tuberculosis fell from seven to six. The continued reduction in the mortality from this cause which has been effected of recent years is most satisfactory.

Cost of maintenance.

203. The cost of maintaining the Asylum fell from Rs. 76,119-6-8 to Rs. 56,802-13-2 and the average cost per head from Rs. 270-11-11 to Rs. 174-13. The figures of the preceding year were swollen by abnormal expenditure on buildings, necessitated by the overcrowding which in former years seriously affected the health of the inmates. The profits in the manufactory department were Rs. 7,240-9-9 or an average of Rs. 49-7-9 per head of inmates employed on manufactures.

The Chief Commissioner much regrets that the execution of a carefully worked-out scheme for the reconstruction of the Asylum is delayed owing to the financial stringency.

SECTION 5.—SANITATION.

[*See* Annual Sanitary Report of the Province of Assam for 1915.]

Urban areas.

204. Although funds were not available as freely as they have been in the past, considerable improvement in urban sanitation was effected during the year, and the progress made on the various schemes for the improvement of water-supply and drainage, which are either in progress or have been completed, has been satisfactory.

Rural areas.

205. The progress made on the schemes for the improvement of rural water-supply was satisfactory. The scheme for the improvement of the water-supply along the banks of the Kallang river in Nowgong has been half completed, fifteen wells remaining to be done. The Local Boards' five-year programmes for the improvement of the supply of drinking water were approved, and funds amounting to Rs. 1,40,113 were provided to finance the first year's programme.

Medical.

206. The sale of quinine "treatments" showed an increase of 3,547 parcels over the figures of the previous year. During the year a number of schoolmasters were enlisted as agents for the sale of quinine, and the result of this experiment is being watched.

Owing to lack of funds and to the impossibility during the war of obtaining an officer for the work, no anti-malarial measures on any considerable scale could be undertaken. The operations undertaken with the object of watching and dealing with cases of kala-azar were continued and five travelling dispensaries were at work. The steady decrease in the virulence of this disease and in the area of its activity is most satisfactory.

SECTION 6.—VACCINATION.

[*See* Vaccination Return of the Province of Assam for the year 1915-16.]

Operations.

207. The total number of operations performed during the year by all agencies was 312,398, which represents a decrease of 7,618 operations as compared with the figures of the previous year. The average number of persons vaccinated by each vaccinator was 961 against 907 of the preceding year. The total number of successful vaccinations declined from 275,159 to 267,545. The decline was considerable in the districts of Khasi and Jaintia Hills and Kamrup. In the latter district the prejudices of the Mahapurusia sect are being gradually overcome, and 9,220 Mahapurusias were vaccinated during the year as compared with 8,900 in the previous year.

The percentages of success in primary vaccinations and re-vaccinations were 96·74 and 61·69, respectively, against 96·29 and 68·00, respectively, in the previous year. Of the total number of primary operations and re-vaccinations performed, 7·32 per cent. and 7·93 per cent., respectively, were inspected by Civil Surgeons, as compared with 4·28 per cent. and 4·05 per cent., respectively, in the previous year. The percentage of inspections in the case of the subordinate inspecting staff was 53·16 and 51·65, respectively, against 51·66 and 41·30, respectively, in the preceding year. The departmental orders limiting the stay at headquarters of the vaccination inspecting staff and prescribing the amount of work to be done by them are being strictly followed.

In towns in which compulsory vaccination is enforced 49·03 per cent. of the available children were protected against small-pox as compared with 67 per cent. in the preceding year. The machinery of the Act is now administered with sufficient efficiency to ensure that few, if any, of the children eventually escape vaccination; and steps are being taken to complete the vaccination of the towns in which it is in default.

The cost of the Department, including that of the lymph prepared at the Shillong Vaccine Depôt, was Rs. 51,441-10-9, which gives an average cost of annas 3-1 for each successful vaccination, against Rs. 62,169-9-0 and annas 3-7, respectively, in the preceding year.

CHAPTER VII.

INSTRUCTION.

SECTION I.—General system of Public Instruction.

[*See* General Administration Report for 1911-12, Part I, pages 121-123.]

SECTION 2.—Education.

General.

208. The year's figures show an increase of 78 in schools, but only of 3,602 or 1·5 per cent. in enrolment. Public institutions have returned a loss in numbers with a small gain in scholars, while private institutions have advanced both in number and strength. The percentage of male pupils to the male population of a school-going age rose from 39·67 to 40·21 and that of female pupils from 5·66 to 5·81.

The total expenditure on public instruction increased from Rs. 26,54,237 to Rs. 26,87,559, the increase being met from private funds.

Collegiate education.

209. There were 593 students on the rolls of the Colleges on 31st March 1916 against 551 on the corresponding date of the preceding year. A proposal to raise the Murarichand College to the Degree standard matured towarads the close of the year. Six candidates from the Cotton College passed for the first time the Degree examination with Honours. The first place in the Intermediate Arts Examination was secured by a student from the Murarichand College. One hundred and fifteen students passed the Intermediate and 34 the Degree examination. The figures for 1914-15 were 114 and 27, respectively. The project for the provision of a permanent habitat for the Murarichand College had to be held back for want of funds. Administrative approval was accorded to the construction of two residences for Professors of the Indian Educational Service in the Cotton College. Gas and water installations were added to the laboratories of the Murarichand College. Temporary hostels were constructed in connection with this College and the Principal and one Professor were provided with temporary quarters in close proximity. The affiliation of both the Colleges remained the same as in the preceding year.

Secondary education.

210. The number of High schools increased by one, but that of pupils decreased from 12,158 to 12,085, the decline being in the Primary Department. No schools were provincialized and the development of the existing schools had to be proceeded with on limited lines, only 5 new sections being opened. The manual training classes at Sylhet and Dibrugarh have made a good beginning.

The percentage of success at the Matriculation Examination rose from 66 to 67. The total number of candidates was 559, of whom 374 passed, the corresponding figures for the previous year being 477 and 314, respectively. Middle English schools show an increase from 110 to 117 in number, but the enrolment declined from 12,469 to 12,353. This falling off is to be attributed mainly to the levy of fees at higher rates and to the popularity of Middle Vernacular schools.

There were 91 Middle Vernacular schools for boys with 10,347 pupils against 64 with 7,385 pupils in 1914-15. The reinstitution of a public examination at the close of the Middle Vernacular course is reported to have been everywhere appreciated. Statistics show that the change has led to the immediate advancement of post primary education.

Primary education.

211. The number of primary schools for boys decreased from 3,926 to 3,859 due mainly to the closure of schools by the Missions in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and in the Garo Hills on account of a reduction of income. The number on the rolls also declined from 175,414 to 175,284 or by only 130, a small decline compared with the loss in the number of schools. Expenditure increased from Rs. 6,43,464 to Rs. 6,55,378.

Training of teachers.

212. The number of training institutions decreased from 11 to 10 owing to the temporary closure of the Tura Training School. The aggregate enrolment of these institutions advanced from 393 to 490. Of 6,074 teachers of vernacular in the province, 2,547 are returned as trained against 2,519 out of 6,077 in the previous year.

INSTRUCTION.

Law College and School.

213. On the 31st March 1916 there were 35 students on the roll of the Earle College as against 13 in the preceding year. The necessary buildings having been completed, the College opened in its new premises with all the three classes up to the final B. L. Degree. The examination results as far as the preliminary examination is concerned were moderately satisfactory. The attached hostel was in occupation. The library was enlarged as far as funds permitted.

There were 16 students on the rolls of the Pleadership class at Gauhati against 17 in the preceding year.

Medical School.

214. The Berry-White Medical School, the only institution of its kind in the province, had an enrolment of 142 on 31st March 1916 against 130 on the corresponding date of the preceding year.

Of the students enrolled 81 were resident of the Brahmaputra Valley, 33 of the Surma Valley. There were in addition 8 Khasis, 2 Nagas, 4 Lushais, 2 Garos, 1 Manipuri, 1 Miri, 1 Gurkha and 9 Bengalis. Fourteen students passed the final examination for the diploma.

Technical and industrial schools.

215. The experimental Middle English School at Tipkai in Dhubri subdivision is reported to be progressing satisfactorily. The scheme for technical education amongst the Lushais made progress. The Government Industrial Schools at Kohima and Shillong continued to do useful work. Seventeen artisans were trained in the various workshops.

Tols.

216. The number of *tols* of all classes increased from 85 to 87, while the number of students enrolled fell from 1,570 to 1,417. On account of the financial stringency created by the war the scheme for the re-organization of Sanskrit education mentioned in last year's report could not be proceeded with.

Madrasas.

217. Public madrasas return a loss both in number and enrolment. There were 9 Madrasas with 750 students as against 39 institutions with an enrolment of 3,059 in 1914-15. The decline is due to the fact that secularised maktabs and madrasas have been returned as primary schools. The Government madrasa continued to make satisfactory progress. The second senior class was opened at the beginning of the year.

Female Education.

218. At the close of the year there were 359 public schools for girls against 365 in the preceding year. Their enrolment declined from 13,026 to 12,924. The number of girls in schools for general instruction, inclusive of those in boys' schools, however, advanced from 26,713 on 31st March 1915 to 27,281. The enrolment in classes beyond the lower primary stage shows an encouraging advance. The percentage of female scholars to the female population of a school-going age was 5·81 against 5·66 in the previous year.

Europe Education.

219. The secondary boys' school for which a building grant was given last year was opened towards the close of the year under report. It had 40 pupils on the 31st March 1916. The enrolment in the two schools that were in existence before the commencement of the year advanced from 113 to 124. Additional accommodation was provided for the State school.

Muhammadan Education.

220. The subjoined statement shows the Muhammadan enrolment in all classes of recognized schools for the past two years :—

	1914-15.	1915-16.
High schools	2,348	2,254
Middle English schools	2,474	2,232
Middle Vernacular schools	1,323	1,888
Primary schools	42,738	45,421

The number of Muhammadans at colleges increased from 85 to 90. The scheme for imparting religious instruction to Muhammadan pupils in vernacular and Anglo-Vernacular schools as recommended by the Muhammadan Educational Conference was initiated during the year. The outlook is reported to be favourable to ultimate success.

Hill Tribes.

221. The statistics of enrolment in the hill schools show a falling off in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and in the Garo Hills due mainly to the closure of schools by the Missions concerned on account of the curtailment of expenditure. Substantial advance was made in the Lushai and Naga Hills.

Tea-garden Schools.

222. There were 167 tea-garden schools against 118 in the year before. One hundred and twelve of the total number belong to the 'C' class.

Dicipline.

223. The discipline of the schools and colleges was marked by but few regrettable features.

SECTION III.—Literature and the Press.

224. The total number of publications received and catalogued was 90 against 57 in the preceding year. They are classified as below according to the subjects dealt with :— Publications registered.

Biography	2
Drama	4
Economics	1
Geography	3
General school books and keys	8
History	1
Law	2
Medical	1
Miscellaneous	31
Mythology	3
Periodicals	27
Poetry	2
Religion	5
	90

Of these books, 40 were educational and 50 non-educational; 78 were first editions; 2 new editions and 10 republications. Eleven were in Assamese, 54 in Bengali, 7 in English, 2 in Khasi, 6 in Lushai, 1 in Mussalmani Bengali, 3 in Sanskrit, 1 in Assamese-Miri, 2 in English-Assamese, 1 in English-Bengali, 1 in Sanskrit-Bengali, 1 in Sanskrit-Bengali-Manipuri.

225. Two English, 1 Anglo-Vernacular, and 11 vernacular newspapers, and 10 periodicals were published during the year. The tone of the press continued to be unobjectionable. Newspapers.

SECTION 4.—Scientific and Literary Societies.

Nil.

SECTION 5.—Arts and Sciences.

Nil.

CHAPTER VIII.

ARCHÆOLOGY.

226. The most interesting of the monuments protected under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, VII of 1904, are the rock inscriptions at the foot of the Kamakhya Hill near Gauhati, the Dargah of Shah Jalal at Sylhet, the copper temple of the Deori Chutiyas near Sadiya, where human sacrifices used to be offered annually, the Kachari ruins at Dimapur, the rock-cut temples at Maibong, the ruins of the Ahom palaces at Rangpur and Garhgaon, and the temples at Jaisagar and Gaurisagar in the Sibsagar district. The majority of these monuments are maintained by the Public Works Department. Special repairs were carried out during the year by the Public Works Department to the Durgadole and Sibdole temples on the bank of the Sibsagar tank and to the Sibdole temple at Gaurisagar. Archæology.

Two inscribed rocks locally known as "Sakreswar" and "Bishwanath Sivalinga" in the neighbourhood of Bishwanath in the district of Darrang were declared protected monuments during the year.

Since the close of the year a project for the construction of a museum at Gauhati has been sanctioned at an estimated cost of Rs. 37,443; but the work cannot be taken up until funds are available.

CHAPTER IX.

MISCELLANEOUS.

SECTION 1.—ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION.

[*See* General Administration Report for 1911-1912, Part II, page 128.]

SECTION 2.—ECCLESIASTICAL.

Ecclesiastical.

227. The Right Rev. H. Pakenham Walsh, Bishop in Assam, toured extensively in the province.

The Ecclesiastical establishment of the province, maintained entirely or in part by this Administration, consists of the chaplaincy of Shillong and the State-aided chaplaincies of Silchar, Darrang, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur. The Rev. W. K. Drawbridge, Chaplain of Shillong, was granted leave out of India in May last, and the charge of the Chaplaincy was assumed by the Ven'ble W. K. Firminger, B.D., Archdeacon of Calcutta. The Chaplain of Shillong visited as usual the out-stations of Gauhati and Dhubri and inspected the cemeteries at Cherrapunji and Goalpara. The Rev. B. F. R. Willcox took charge of the vacant chaplaincy of Darrang with effect from the 1st December 1915, while the chaplaincy of Silchar has again fallen vacant owing to the Rev. W. E. McFarlane having proceeded on war service. The Rev. A. Grey Buchanan has been added to the Ecclesiastical establishment of the Lakhimpur district. The Rev. D. H. Gillan, Senior Chaplain of the Church of Scotland, visited and held services for about three months in tea gardens in the Assam Valley Districts.

SECTION 3.—STATIONERY.

Stationery.

228. The value of the stationery supplied to the province was Rs. 59,367, including Rs. 12,000 for articles supplied to the Secretariat Press. The value of stationery consumed amounted to Rs. 51,867. There were savings of Rs. 7,500 or about 13 per cent. Strict economy is being enforced in regard to the use of paper and of articles of stationery generally.

SECTION 4.—PRINTING.

Printing.

229. Cash receipts of the Secretariat Press rose by Rs. 49 to Rs. 3,449 and expenditure increased from Rs. 1,11,313 to Rs. 1,19,527. The increase in expenditure was due chiefly to an increase of 6,165 pages of fresh composition. The actual amount paid to workmen exceeded the value of outturn by Rs. 1,639, the loss occurring entirely in the Press and Machine Branch.

SECTION 5.—VETERINARY DEPARTMENT.

[*See* Report of the Civil Veterinary Department of Assam for 1915-16.]

Staff.

230. The staff of the Department was increased by the appointment of only one newly qualified assistant, while its strength was reduced by the loss of three assistants, of whom one resigned and two were removed from service. The total strength at the end of the year was 36 assistants and 3 Inspectors: of these, 28 assistants were under Local Boards, 2 in Hill districts, 5 in the reserve and one on the staff. A large number of candidates were, however, sent to the Training College and it is hoped that the increase of pay which has recently been introduced will attract a reasonable number of competent men.

Cattle disease.

231. Rinderpest was very virulent during the year and was responsible for nearly half of the deaths from contagious diseases. Much inoculation work was done, and its value can be judged from the fact that only about 1·4 per cent. of the inoculated animals subsequently died. More than 3,500 deaths were ascribed to foot-and-mouth disease, though apparently the lives of most of these animals could have been saved by proper treatment. There was an improvement in the reporting of epidemics which is a step in the right direction.

Stock.

232. Lack of funds rendered it impossible to proceed with the scheme for the supply of good bulls from Manipur. The question of improving the live stock of the Province constantly engages the attention of the Chief Commissioner, but all efforts in this direction will be wasted unless the raiyats co-operate by bestowing more care upon their cattle.

A. S. P. O. (J. & G.) No. 45—450—15-1-1917.—D. C. N. & A. E. R.

REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION OF ASSAM

FOR

1916-17.

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PART I.

SUMMARY

[Prescribed maximum length from 10 to 15 pages.]

PART I.

GENERAL SUMMARY.

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REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION OF ASSAM

FOR

1916-17.

PART I.—GENERAL SUMMARY.

CHAPTER I.

PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY.

TOURS OF THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF ASSAM.

Tours.

1. The Chief Commissioner, accompanied by the Hon'ble Mr. B. C. Allen, Chief Secretary, and Captain W. Lowry-Corry, Personal Assistant, left Shillong on Sunday, the 9th July 1916, for a tour in both the Assam and Surma Valleys. The afternoon was spent on the S. S. " Brahmakund " at Gauhati, and the party left the same evening by the seven o'clock train. Furkating, the Assam-Bengal Railway station for Golaghat, was reached before 9 o'clock the next day, where the Chief Commissioner was met by the local officials, the motor drive to Golaghat being completed in the afternoon. Owing to the war, all arrivals and departures throughout the tour were " private." Two days were spent at Golaghat, and during the stay all local institutions were inspected, while several deputations were received.

Leaving Furkating by the night train, Sibsagar Road station was reached on the morning of the 13th July. During the day the Chief Commissioner paid a short visit to Nazira, where he met a representative gathering of planters at lunch at the residence of Mr. Maxwell, and Sibsagar was reached by motor the same evening. Here two days were spent in inspecting local institutions, and in receiving deputations.

Returning to Sibsagar Road station on the 16th July 1916, the party entrained for Jorhat *viâ* Moriani station, the junction of the Jorhat Railway with the Assam-Bengal Railway, Jorhat being reached the same afternoon. Here a halt of four days was made. On the 17th July the Chief Commissioner attended a theatrical performance at the Cinnamara Club in aid of the St. John Ambulance Red Cross Fund, while on the 18th July the new high school building was formally declared open. The rest of the local institutions were also visited, and the Chief Commissioner received several deputations.

Leaving Jorhat by special train on the night of the 20th July, the party reached the " Brahmakund " at Kokilamukh by 9-30 P.M. the same night. An early start was made by steamer on the morning of the 21st July, Kharupatiaghat was reached the next morning, and the Chief Commissioner motored into Mangaldai the same evening. Here a halt was made on the 22nd July, the time being spent in inspecting local institutions and in receiving deputations; one of the principal topics discussed being a scheme for a water supply for the town.

Returning to Kharupatiaghat by motor the same night, the Chief Commissioner left by his steamer the "Brahmakund" on the morning of the 24th July for his

tour in the Surma Valley. Brief halts were made to pick up mails at Gauhati, Goalpara, Dhubri, Goalundo, Narainganj and Mudna *en-route*, while Sunamganj was reached on the afternoon of the 31st July.

Two complete days were spent here in inspecting local institutions and in receiving deputations of the Mahishya Samiti and Anjuman-i-Islamia. On the 1st August the Chief Commissioner laid the foundation stone of the Victoria Memorial Hall and on the 2nd he attended the distribution of prizes at the high school at which function rings and certificates were presented to the local sarpanches.

The " Brahmakund " left Sunamganj on the morning of the 3rd August for Sylhet, which was reached the same evening. Here four days were spent, one of the chief subjects for discussion being the case of the Baniyachang high school, in which Rai Bahadur Baikuntha Nath Sarma and Babu Nagendra Nath Chaudhury were interested. Local deputations were also received, and all local institutions were duly inspected, while on the 7th August the Chief Commissioner visited sites in connection with the Murarichand College, as well as the site of the proposed waterworks.

Leaving Sylhet on the 8th August, the Chief Commissioner visited Karimganj staying there for two days, chiefly for the purpose of opening the Natiakhal bridge. Local institutions were also inspected and several deputations received, the main topic of discussion being the proposed improvement and extension of the town, while the new site acquired for the dispensary was inspected.

Leaving Karimganj on the 11th August, the Chief Commissioner and party entrained for Calcutta and Simla, where they were the guests of His Excellency the Viceroy. The 16th and 17th August were spent in Simla, and leaving there on the 18th August Shillong was reached on the 20th idem.

The winter tour of the Chief Commissioner commenced from the 13th November 1916. He left Shillong accompanied by the Hon'ble Mr. B. C. Allen, Chief Secretary, and Captain Lowry-Corry, Personal Assistant, and reached Gauhati on the 15th after halting a day at Umling camp on the way. He halted for two days at Gauhati and on the 18th crossed the Brahmaputra and left Amingaon by special train for Abhoyapuri, the headquarters of the Bijni State, which was reached the same evening. The Chief Commissioner halted at Abhoyapuri on the 19th, which day was fully occupied in attending various functions. At 10-30 A.M. the Rani Sahiba was visited and at 11 A.M. the Chief Commissioner visited the high school, girls' school and the dispensary. There was a Durbar held at 5-30 P.M. at which the Rani Sahiba was presented with the Kaisar-i-Hind Medal in the presence of the Estate officers and tenants. At 5 P.M. the Chief Commissioner attended the sports organised by the Bijni State. On the morning of the 20th Chief Commissioner left Abhoyapuri and arrived at Gauripur the same evening, where he was the guest of the Raja. The Raja was present at the railway station to receive the Chief Commissioner, and the principal persons and officers of the State were introduced to him, and at 5-15 P.M. the charitable dispensary was inspected. On the 21st November 1916 the following public functions were attended by the Chief Commissioner at Gauripur :—

(1) 7-30 A.M —Opening of the school buildings, prize distribution, and inspection of the school hostels.
(2) 12 noon.—Receiving the deputation of the Gauripur Education Committee.
(3) 12-30 P.M.—Inspection of the Sanskrit *Tol* and the girls' school.
(4) 4 P.M.—Sports.

In the evening the Chief Commissioner dined with the Raja.

At 7 A.M. on the 22nd November the Chief Commissioner and party left Gauripur for Barpeta, where they arrived on the 23rd. He halted here for four days, during which time he inspected the local institutions and received deputations from the people of the town. Leaving Barpeta on the 28th November the Chief Commissioner toured in the interior of the forest area between Bogidara and Gossaingaon in the Goalpara and Kamrup districts until the 5th December 1916.

On the 6th the Chief Commissioner, returned to Sorbhog Railway station and proceeded to Nalbari, where he opened the Gurdon high school and also met the residents of the place in the afternoon. He visited the Sugarcane Farm on the morning of the 7th, arriving at Gauhati the same evening.

From the 8th to 14th December the Chief Commissioner halted at Gauhati and leaving again on the 15th he arrived at Nongpoh in the afternoon of the same day. After halting there one day he proceeded to Shillong on the 17th December

1916. The Chief Commissioner stopped at Shillong until the 22nd and then left for the Kaskuri and Teka Camps for X'mas whence he returned to Shillong on the 31st December 1916.

On the 12th January 1917 the Chief Commissioner left Shillong, accompanied by the Chief Secretary and Lieutenant Sanderson, Personal Assistant, for a tour in the Surma Valley, but on the way to Gauhati met with a very serious accident at mile 43. He had to be removed to Nongpoh, where he was under medical treatment until the 26th January 1917. On the advice of the Civil Surgeon he returned to Shillong on the 27th. The doctors then advised him not to leave Shillong for some time and in consequence he regretfully postponed this tour.

CHANGES IN THE ADMINISTRATION.

Changes in the Administration.

2. No administrative changes of importance were introduced during the year. The Hon'ble Sir Archdale Earle, K.C.I.E., held charge of the Administration throughout the year.

EFFECTS OF THE WAR ON THE ADMINISTRATION.

Effects of the war on the Administration.

3. The absence of panic or excitement which was mentioned in last year's report was again a noticeable feature of the year. The high prices prevailing in many of the district bazars caused some disquietude and after the close of the year were responsible for disturbances in the district of Goalpara. Apart from such incidents, the attitude of the general populace remained unchanged and outwardly at any rate there was little indication that the inhabitants of the province were affected adversely by the abnormal conditions of the time, though the shortness of shipping caused considerable embarrassment to the Tea Planters, who found it difficult to sell their stocks. The continuance of the policy of rigid economy in the administration and the postponement of all schemes and projects with the exception of those which were imperative and unavoidable facilitated the release of a large number of Government servants for military duties. Up to September 1917, 129 officials and 217 non-officials had joined either the Indian Army Reserve of Officers or the regular army, while 3,028 officers and men of the Assam Rifles and of the Assam Civil Police had gone on service. A labour corps, 2,000 strong, for service in France was raised in Manipur and in each of the districts of the Naga Hills, the Lushai Hills and the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, and a large number of Garos were recruited for the combined Garo-Sylhetti corps. Owing to a change of policy the last mentioned corps was not completed, but after the close of the year one company, 500 strong, of Garos and Nepalese went to France, and the Sylhettis contributed three sections of a labour corps for Mesopotamia. A ready response was forthcoming from the province as a whole to the calls which were made upon it for subscriptions to the various war funds. Mr. R. Henderson, C.I.E., contributed a sum of Rs. 31,000 for the purchase of an aeroplane and His Highness the Raja of Manipur was distinguished by the assistance which he afforded in raising the Manipuri Labour Corps and in the readiness with which he complied with every suggestion for the provision of help in men and money from the resources of his State.

RELATIONS WITH TRIBUTARY STATES AND FRONTIER AFFAIRS.

Manipur.

4. The year was uneventful as regards purely internal affairs. His Highness the Raja relinquished the office of President of the State Durbar, which was taken by the Vice-President. A Double Company of Manipuris was raised for the army and sent to Lansdowne for training. Two thousand men, chiefly of the hill tribes, were recruited for a labour corps for France, in spite of some obstruction on the part of certain Kuki chiefs. Considerable damage was caused to the State by the floods. Serious damage was done to crops, buildings and communications by floods in October, but a shortage of rice was prevented by an embargo placed on its export. Public health was not good in the valley. The revenue of the State, excluding the "water rate," fell from Rs. 6,40,225 to Rs. 5,99,855; the gross expenditure rose from Rs. 6,47,904 to Rs. 7,17,035.

Frontier tribes.

5. During the year, no operations beyond the frontier were undertaken with the exception of a short visit to the Taikhel of the Galong Abors and a tour across the Sibsagar frontier. Two petty raids were made by Eastern Dafias. The Political Officers continued to improve relations with the tribes under their control and the behaviour of the tribes was generally satisfactory. A labour corps for service in France was raised in each of the districts of the Lushai, the Naga, and the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and a large number of Garos were recruited for the combined Garo-Sylhetti Labour Corps.

CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

Condition of the people.

6. Considerable damage was done by the October floods in Cachar and the Karimganj and North Sylhet subdivisions of Sylhet, and large sums were disbursed in the distribution of gratuitous relief and agricultural loans. In the Assam Valley the year was, on the whole, unfavourable and damage was done to the crops in many districts by periods of drought and heavy autumnal rains. The district of Nowgong suffered severely from the disastrous flood of the Kopili river in October 1916. The prices of food-grains were high throughout the year in nearly all districts of the Assam Valley. The influx of settlers from Bengal into the Assam Valley and the Sunamganj subdivision of the Sylhet district continued.

CHAPTER II.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAND.

REALISATION OF THE REVENUE.

Realisation of the revenue.

7. There was an increase of 145 square miles in the total settled area and of Rs. 2,11,610 in the revenue demand. The total demand on account of miscellaneous land revenue rose from Rs. 7,20,092 to Rs. 7,77,175, of which 93·31 per cent. was collected. The total amount advanced during the year under the Agriculturists' Loans Act was Rs. 16,12,515. The number of processes issued increased by 5,515, while the fees realised decreased by Rs. 2,453. Of the total of 546 partition cases for disposal, 339 cases were disposed of.

SURVEY AND SETTLEMENTS.

Survey.

8. The Assam Survey Department remained under the control of the Superintendent, Eastern Circle, Survey of India.

The work of the Traverse Party consisted mainly in the traverse surveys of extension villages and in the relaying of thak and other boundaries. The Shillong Drawing Office printed 85,765 copies of maps for Assam. Seventeen students passed the Mandals' Certificate Examination from the survey school.

Settlement.

9. The resettlement operations in the district of Cachar, the Jaintia parganas of Sylhet and the experimental operations in the permanently-settled tract in Sylhet were in progress during the year.

In Cachar the assessment proposals of all the 6 groups, *viz.*, Hailakandi, Katigora, Silchar, Chatla, Banraj and Vernerpur, were sanctioned by the Local Administration and revenue attestation for them was completed before the close of the settlement year except in case of 8 villages only. The rates of assessment of the land under tea and waste in tea gardens held under *mirasdari* leases have also been sanctioned since the close of the year.

The programme of office work during the year was heavy and could not be fully carried out, as it was hampered by the work in connection with the floods of October 1916. The fairing of the *dagchitha* and final inking of maps were completed and the copying of the *jamabandi* register and final *pattas* was started towards the close of the year.

In Jaintia the programme for the year, *viz.*, the revenue attestation and final preparation of the records of the Gowainghat group and the submission of the assessment reports of the Jaintiapur and Kanairghat groups, was completed during the year. The inking up of all the new maps was completed and they were sent for reproduction. Proposals for the resettlement of fisheries of the Gowainghat group were submitted to the Commissioner.

The experimental settlement operations in the three permanently-settled parganas of Renga, Baraya and Dakhinkach in the district of Sylhet were closed so far as the Settlement Officer was concerned in August 1917. The only work remaining to be done is the disposal of cases under sections 105 and 106 of the Bengal Tenancy Act which was begun by a Munsiff at the close of the Civil Court vacation and is expected to be finished by next March. The final report on this settlement will be submitted after the completion of this work.

Besides the above regular operations, the work in connection with the revision of classification of land taken up after resettlement in the districts of Sibsagar and Kamrup which began last year was finished during the year.

LAND RECORDS.

10. There was no change in the constitution of the Land Records staff. The accepted policy of substituting resident for non-resident recorders was kept in view. Land Records.

During the year 5 recorders were added to the Land Records staff in Nowgong.

SETTLEMENT FOR SPECIAL CULTIVATION (WASTE LANDS).

11. The total area settled for special cultivation increased by 23,029 acres and the revenue demand assessed thereon by Rs. 15,631. Settlement for special cultivation.

WARDS' AND ATTACHED ESTATES.

12. Two new estates in Sylhet and the Mechpara Estate in Goalpara came under the management of the Court of Wards. The collections of all the estates were below normal as the result of the floods of 1915 and 1916. In only one estate was there an appreciable reduction of debts. The cost of management fell from 16·80 to 13·64 per cent. of the current demand. Wards' and Attached Estates.

REVENUE AND RENT-PAYING CLASSES.

13. The report of the Special Officer on the defects of the existing rent law in the permanently-settled estates of the district of Goalpara was received and is under the consideration of the Local Administration. Relations between landlords and tenants.

CHAPTER III.

PROTECTION.

LEGISLATION.

14. Sections 93 to 100 of the Bengal Tenancy Act, VIII of 1885, were extended to the permanently-settled parganas in the district of Goalpara. Legislation.

Two Acts, *viz.*, the Assam Medical Act, and an Amendment to the Assam Local Self-Government Act, to provide for the construction and control of tramways, were passed by the Council.

POLICE.

15. The principal work of the Assam Rifles was the training of drafts for the Regular Army. The strength of each of the Battalions was maintained at approximately 1,000 rifles, thus facilitating the regular despatch of drafts of 200 volunteers to the Army every two months. The total number of volunteers from the Assam Rifles sent to the Gurkha Regiments during the year 1916 was 1,249 officers and men. The Chief Commissioner inspected the Naga Hills Battalion and the Darrang Battalion and was favourably impressed with their efficiency. No expeditions or promenades of importance were undertaken during the year. Assam Rifles.

16. No Assistant or Deputy Superintendent was appointed during the year, but the subordinate police force was increased by 25 officers and men. The standard of drill and discipline of the Armed Branch was maintained. The number of criminal charges brought against the police was 76. Of the 30 true cases, 12 ended in conviction, one for extortion and 11 for minor offences. Civil Police.

17. There was an increase of 1,461 cases of cognizable crime for disposal. 32·1 per cent. of the cases investigated by the police were brought to trial, and of these 87·2 per cent. ended in conviction. The increase in cognizable Crime.

cases is attributed to the high prices of food-grains due to abnormal floods in both the Valleys and to the influx of foreign criminal gangs in two districts of the Assam Valley. The number of true cases of dacoity increased from 7 to 9.

Finance. 18. The total net cost of the Department during the year was Rs. 23,80,863 against Rs. 22,89,978 in 1915.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE.

Plains Districts. 19. The number of offences reported increased from 41,951 to 43,111 and the number of cases brought to trial from 19,416 to 20,177; the percentage of convictions rose from 41·2 to 43·5.

In Sessions Courts 286 persons were convicted, 153 discharged or acquitted and the cases of 19 were referred for the orders of the High Court.

The sentences of Subordinate Courts were confirmed on appeal in 85 per cent. of the cases before the High Court, in 61·4 per cent. of the cases before the Sessions Courts and in 61·7 per cent. of the cases before District Magistrates. The charges incurred in the Criminal Courts amounted to Rs. 4,01,215 and the receipts to Rs. 2,29,769.

Hill Districts and frontier tracts. In hill districts and frontier tracts 1,488 persons were convicted in 1,053 cases involving 1,971 persons.

JAILS.

Jails. 20. The daily average population rose from 2,140·55 to 2,215·44, the highest figure on record in this province. As a result of the various sanitary measures introduced in the jails two years ago, the hospital admission rate and the death-rate per mille decreased from 960·50 and 21·49 in 1915 to 896·89 and 18·51, respectively in 1916. The death-rate of 1916 was the lowest ever recorded in the province. Overcrowding in jails was avoided by the adoption of temporary expedients which increased the accommodation by 118 beds. The gross profits on the employment of convicts rose from Rs. 47,602 to Rs. 64,813, and the net cost per head of average strength amounted to Rs. 89-8-0 against Rs. 108-14-0 in 1915.

CIVIL JUSTICE.

Plains districts. 21. The number of civil suits disposed of exceeded the number instituted. Forty thousand one hundred and eighty-nine original suits were instituted during the year, and of 51,601 cases on the files, 41,606 were disposed of. The corresponding figures for 1915-16 were 41,118, 54,291 and 43,880, respectively. Of 29,448 applications received for execution of decrees, 23,070 were disposed of and a total sum of Rs. 6,16,411 was realized. In 69 per cent. of the execution cases proceedings were infructuous. In the case of appeals to courts other than the High Court, the orders of the lower court were upheld in 68 per cent. of the cases and reversed in 14 per cent. and modified in the rest. The receipts of the courts amounted to Rs. 7,05,190 and the charges to Rs. 2,91,842.

Hill districts and frontier tracts. In hill districts and frontier tracts 1,980 suits and 55 appeals were decided. Suits to the value of Rs. 2,04,798 were instituted.

REGISTRATION.

Registration. 22. The permanent retention of three whole-time temporary offices, one in the Assam Valley and two in the Surma Valley, was sanctioned during the year. The number of documents registered increased from 90,089 to 90,271. Receipts fell from Rs. 1,11,035 to Rs. 1,05,653 and expenditure rose from Rs. 64,136 to Rs. 66,480.

The number of ceremonies registered by Muhammadan Marriage Registrars decreased by 1,476 and the aggregate income of these Registrars fell from Rs. 9,812 to Rs. 7,623.

Three new companies limited by shares were registered during the year. Two companies went into voluntary liquidation while the liquidation of another was ordered by the court. Five companies were struck off the register under section 247 of the Indian Companies Act. At the close of the year 55 companies limited by shares were at work with an aggregate paid-up capital of Rs. 24,71,726.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS.

Municipalities. 23. The total income and expenditure increased and the incidence of taxation per head of population rose from Rs. 2-0-9 to Rs. 2-5-1. During the course of the year the Sibsagar Station was converted into a municipality under Act III (B. C.) of 1884, and since the close of the year the same Act has been introduced into the Barpeta

Municipality in place of Act V(B.C.) of 1876. Unions have been constituted at Doom Dooma in the Sadr subdivision of the Lakhimpur district, and at Palasbari in the Sadr subdivision of the Kamrup district. All the municipalities, except Gauhati and possibly Silchar, ended the year in a sound financial position. The conservancy arrangements in almost all municipalities were improved and the services of the ten Sanitary Inspectors supplied to municipalities at Government expense proved of much value in securing more efficient administration of the conservancy system, but the conservancy arrangements of most towns are still defective and call for largely increased expenditure. The water-works at Silchar and at Tezpur were completed shortly after the close of the year. Satisfactory progress was made with the Sylhet water-works. The experiment with well sinking in connection with the Dhubri water-works has proved a failure, and it has been decided to abandon the scheme in favour of one for utilising the Brahmaputra as the source of water-supply. A pipe water-supply scheme for the town of Sibsagar has been administratively approved, but execution has had to be postponed owing to lack of funds. The lamentable series of prosecutions of members of the staff of the Silchar, Sylhet and Sunamganj Municipalities for defalcation of municipal money have at last come to an end, and close attention is now being paid to the accounts of these bodies and to the proper supervision of the collecting and accounting staff. No further defalcations of municipal money were brought to light during the year.

Local Boards.

24. There was no change in the constitution of the Local Boards. The Deputy Commissioner or the Subdivisional Officer was in all cases appointed Chairman; but since the close of the year the election of a non-official Chairman has as an experimental measure been sanctioned in the case of one Board.

Owing to the financial stringency Government contributions had to be reduced by about Rs. 44,000. Apart from this, the Boards' total income remained almost stationary. The incomes of a few Boards suffered on account of floods; and three Boards were, in consequence, obliged to take loans from Government.

The expenditure on education rose by a little over Rs. 10,000 and that on medical aid and sanitation exclusive of water-supply by about Rs. 12,000. The progress in these Departments was steady.

The expenditure on the improvement of rural water-supply was a little more than two lakhs, representing an increase of about Rs. 23,000 over the amount spent in the previous year. Substantial progress was made by many Boards in the work undertaken with the grants given by Government in connection with the five years' scheme of improvement of rural water-supply.

Progress in the improvement of communications was hampered by the inability of Government, owing to financial stringency, to continue the liberal grants made for the purpose during recent years. Floods had, as in the previous year, damaged roads and more money had to be spent on repairs than on new works.

Sixty-two Village Authorities were started during the year in selected areas in the Kamrup and Sibsagar districts. Thirty-two of these were in full working order during the year; the remaining thirty began work after the close of the year. The former, which are situated in the Kamrup district, spent a total sum of Rs. 9,365 on various improvements in the villages concerned, but the amount of work actually accomplished would seem to be considerably more than this figure indicates, and the way in which these institutions have begun their career is very encouraging.

MILITARY (VOLUNTEERING).

Military (Volunteering).

25. The Volunteer Corps of the province maintained their strength and efficiency and were merged in the Indian Defence Force on the 1st April 1917. At the close of the year the combined strength of the Assam Valley Light Horse and the Surma Valley Light Horse stood at 86 officers and 1,227 rank and file against 89 and 1,295 respectively, in the previous year.

CHAPTER IV.

PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE.

Agriculture and Horticulture.

26. Mr. McKay held the post of Deputy Director of Agriculture, Surma Valley. Mr. Meggitt continued to act in place of Mr. Birt who was still on military duty. There was a small increase in the subordinate staff. Sugarcane experiments were carried out at the Jorhat Farm. The sugarcane grown on the Kamrup Farm yielded a magnificent crop ; but it was found impossible to convert it all into *gur*, and arrangements have been made to manufacture white sugar from it. At the Karimganj Farm the experiments in the line breeding of rice were continued and at the Upper Shillong Farm trials were made of different varieties of potatoes and of different seed rates and maize, job's tears and *raishan* were grown successfully as fodder crops. At the Shillong fruit station some 23 acres were planted and good apples and pears were obtained from the older trees.

The demonstrations undertaken were chiefly concerned with the utility of manures for rice and sugarcane, the introduction of improved varieties of sugarcane, potatoes, and fodder crops, and the use of the 3-roller sugarcane mills and of the Meston plough.

The poultry farm in the Lushai Hills was closed.

Ten leaflets and one bulletin were issued during the year.

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES.

Co-operative Societies.

27. The number of societies rose from 315 to 344, the number of members from 18,232 to 19,700 and the working capital from Rs. 8,98,537 to Rs. 10,59,308. The reserve funds of central banks increased from Rs. 14,019 to Rs. 16,606, while those of agricultural and non-agricultural societies increased from Rs. 63,255 to Rs. 85,306 and from Rs. 14,496 to Rs. 16,239 respectively. The financial stringency rendered impossible the provision of funds for the sanctioned appointment of a Registrar of Co-operative Societies and Director of Industries, or for the increase of the supervising staff.

WEATHER AND CROPS.

Weather and crops.

28. The agricultural conditions of the year were on the whole favourable, and the rainfall not markedly abnormal, except in October when exceptionally heavy precipitations caused high floods in Cachar, parts of Sylhet and Nowgong. Agricultural loans and gratuitous relief were distributed on a liberal scale to relieve the distress caused by the floods. The outturn of rice—the staple food of the province—was better than in the preceding year. The yield of other crops, such as sugarcane, mustard and *matikalai*, was fair ; the increased outturn of jute was especially noticeable. There was no serious outbreak of cattle-disease.

FORESTS.

Forests.

29. The total area of reserved forests at the close of the year was 4,911 square miles. Seven hundred and thirty-three square miles were undergoing settlement, of which 32 square miles were finally notified. No new working plans were framed. The prescriptions of the existing plans were followed as far as possible. Fellings were considerably in arrears in Goalpara and the Nambor working plan area owing to the lack of demand. The Goalpara tramway was worked at a profit but was not so successful as in the previous year. The question of the regeneration of *simul* received close attention and steps were taken to increase the supply of tea box timber and to enable the saw-mills to procure labour, elephants and machinery. The financial position of the Department showed a further improvement. The surplus at the close of the year was Rs. 4,76,525. The control of grazing in the unclassed State forests in the Assam Valley was transferred to the Revenue Department after the close of the year and special Superintendents of grazing were appointed. Four hundred and twenty-four elephants were captured in the Goalpara-Bhutan mahals and in the Naga Hills and Nowgong.

MANUFACTURES AND MINES.

30. Although there was an increase in the acreage under tea, the outturn decreased to 242, 184, 571 lbs., or by about 1·3 per cent. Green tea was manufactured only in the Cachar district. Owing to prohibitions and restrictions on account of the war exports fell in quantity. Prices did not vary much. Tea.

31. Two new mining leases and three prospecting licenses were issued during the year. The output of coal decreased by 21,706 tons, while that of oil increased by 686,740 gallons. The royalty realised increased from Rs. 62,714 to Rs. 1,16,657. Mineral oil was for the first time obtained in considerable quantities at the Burma Oil Company's wells near Badarpur. Minerals.

FACTORIES.

32. At the close of the year there were 14 factories in the province employing 2,968 workers. Eight of the factories were inspected, and no adverse comments were made on them. Three minor accidents were reported. Factories.

TRADE.

33. Climatic conditions were on the whole favourable to cultivation in spite of disastrous floods in parts of the Surma Valley. Imports increased in quantity from 10,301,848 in 1915-16 to 10,457,233½ maunds in 1916-17, but their value declined from Rs. 9,82,39,372 to Rs. 9,42,72,013 and exports fell in quantity from 10,694,093$\frac{3}{40}$ to 10,041,373½ maunds and in value from Rs. 16,01,78,473 to Rs. 11,98,20,645. The value of the total trade between Assam and other provinces fell from Rs. 25,84,17,845 to Rs. 21,40,92,658. Rail and River-borne Trade.

34. The value of Frontier Trade registered was Rs. 20,28,738. There was a contraction of trade with Bhutan, and also with the Akas and Daflas. Frontier Trade.

PUBLIC WORKS.

35. The total outlay on Provincial Civil Works in charge of the Public Works Department amounted to Rs. 33,60,499. Of this a sum of Rs. 3,60,701 was spent on original works in connection with provincial buildings, while a sum of Rs. 1,80.805 was spent on the maintenance of the existing buildings. The expenditure on original works communications was Rs. 2,09,657, while the maintenance charges of the existing communications were Rs. 12,92,570. Public Works.

CHAPTER V.

REVENUE AND FINANCE.

36. Gross receipts rose from Rs. 1,79,65,165 in the previous year to Rs. 1,85,05,555, while the gross expenditure fell from Rs. 1,57,69,405 to Rs. 1,49,20,062. Gross revenue.

37. The provincial account opened with a balance of Rs. 19,97,779 which included Imperial assignments for various purposes aggregating Rs. 15,84,000. Receipts amounted to Rs. 1,45,57,270 and expenditure to Rs. 1,44,34,836. The provincial account closed with a balance of Rs. 21,20,213 including Rs. 14,69,000 of Imperial assignments. Provincial finance.

38. The only salt warehouse in the province was at Ajmiriganj. Imports increased by 6,600 maunds, while clearances fell by 3,849 maunds. The average price of salt increased from Rs. 3-4-0 to Rs. 3-8-0 per maund, and the net revenue increased by Rs. 15,545. Salt.

39. The revenue derived under all heads amounted to Rs. 55,23,631 against Rs. 53,94,136 in the preceding year, the net increase being 2·4 per cent. The depressing influence of the war on trade, the distress caused by the disastrous floods in certain localities, the various restrictive measures introduced in recent years with the object of checking consumption, and the high retail prices necessitated by enhanced vend fees, all combined to prevent the normal expansion of consumption. The increase in revenue was due mainly to favourable settlements of shops and the consequent increase in receipts from license fees. Excise.

Stamps. 40. Receipts under the Stamp and Court-fees Acts rose from Rs. 14,03,075 to Rs. 14,13,341. There was a decrease of Rs. 14,537 under non-judicial stamps owing chiefly to the abnormal floods and poor harvests in the Surma Valley, but this was more than counterbalanced by an increase of Rs. 24,803 under "Judicial stamps."

Income-tax. 41. Income-tax receipts yielded an increase of 46·36 per cent. and amounted to Rs. 6,77,360.

Land revenue. 42. The total ordinary land revenue demand rose from Rs. 77,82,273 to Rs. 81,82,484 and the miscellaneous land revenue from Rs. 7,20,092 to Rs. 7,77,175. 88·46 per cent. of the ordinary land revenue demand and 93·31 per cent. of the miscellaneous land revenue demand were collected.

Local rates. 43. The current demand on account of local rates amounted to Rs. 8,25,635, of which 82·77 per cent. was collected. Remissions amounted to Rs. 359.

CHAPTER VI.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Vital statistics. 44. Public health was not seriously affected during the year by the adverse meteorological conditions which prevailed. Heavy floods which occurred in parts of the Surma Valley and in Nowgong caused a rise in the price of food-stuffs and necessitated the grant of gratuitous relief and of agricultural loans in certain areas. The death-rate per mille for the year was 28·59 as against 30·86 in the preceding year and a quinquennial average of 26·37. The birth-rate was 30·52 per mille, as compared with 33·60 in 1915 and a quinquennial average of 32·75.

IMMIGRATION AND LABOUR INSPECTION.

Immigration. 45. There was a considerable decrease in the number of immigrants during the year under report. The mortality on transit was also considerably less than that of the previous year.

Both the recorded birth and death rates were lower than those of the previous year.

Two complaints of ill-treatment were brought by coolies against their employers and there were 7 cases of riot or unlawful assembly, and 2 cases of assault instituted by managers against coolies. The relations between the planters and the neighbouring villagers were, as usual, satisfactory.

MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS.

Charitable dispensaries. 46. During the year 1,627,949 patients were treated at 215 dispensaries. Thirteen new dispensaries were opened and 3 were closed. The percentage of the population obtaining medical relief in State-public, Local Fund and private-aided dispensaries was 21·16.

Lunatic Asylum. 47. At the close of the year there were 110 criminal and 233 non-criminal lunatics in the Tezpur Asylum. The death-rate per cent. on the average strength was high (14·44), and is attributable mainly to overcrowding. Steps have been taken to remedy this.

SANITATION.

Sanitation. 48. The aggregate expenditure of urban bodies on sanitation amounted to Rs. 4,45,309. Satisfactory progress was made on the various schemes for the improvement of water-supply both in urban and rural areas and of drainage in urban areas.

The anti-*kala-azar* operations were maintained, and four travelling dispensaries were at work. The total mortality from the disease varied little from that of the preceding two years.

VACCINATION.

Vaccination. 49. The number of operations performed in the province was 371,662 against 312,398 in the previous year. The total number of successful vaccinations increased from 267,545 to 305,622. The increase was considerable in four districts, while in the remainder there was practically no change as compared with the previous year. The rate of mortality from small-pox fell from ·58 to ·47 per mille.

CHAPTER VII

INSTRUCTION.

Education.

50. Public institutions increased in number from 4,560 to 4,587, while their enrolment declined from 226,845 to 224,819. The expenditure on education decreased from Rs. 26,87,559 to Rs. 25,59,290, the decline being under the head "Public funds."

Students on the rolls of colleges increased from 593 to 688. The proposal to advance the Murarichand College to the degree standard materialised during the year.

There was an advance in the enrolment of high and middle vernacular schools, while the enrolment of middle English schools showed a decline due to a falling off in the number of schools.

A slight advance in female education is recorded.

LITERATURE AND THE PRESS.

Literature and the Press.

51. Fifty-three publications were received and catalogued against ninety in the previous year. Thirteen newspapers and eight periodicals were published during the year.

CHAPTER VIII.

ARCHÆOLOGY.

Archæology.

52. Special repairs to the Sibdole temple at Gaurisagar were undertaken by the Public Works Department.

CHAPTER IX.

MISCELLANEOUS.

STATIONERY.

Stationery.

53. Savings were effected by nearly all Departments. In view of the present situation strict economy is being exercised in the use of paper and stationery generally.

PRINTING.

Printing.

54. There was a decrease in cash receipts and in expenditure. The amount paid to workmen continued to exceed the value of their outturn.

VETERINARY.

Veterinary.

55. The difficulty of getting suitable recruits for the Department has been overcome by the improvement in the terms of service.

There was heavy mortality from contagious disease among cattle. The number of deaths reported was 44,952 as compared with 43,536 in the previous year. Rinderpest was responsible for nearly half this number. Inoculation work was continued with good results. Suggestions for the improvement of the local breeds of cattle engaged the attention of the Chief Commissioner.

PART II.

THE REPORT.

[Prescribed maximum length—50 pages.]

PART II.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT.

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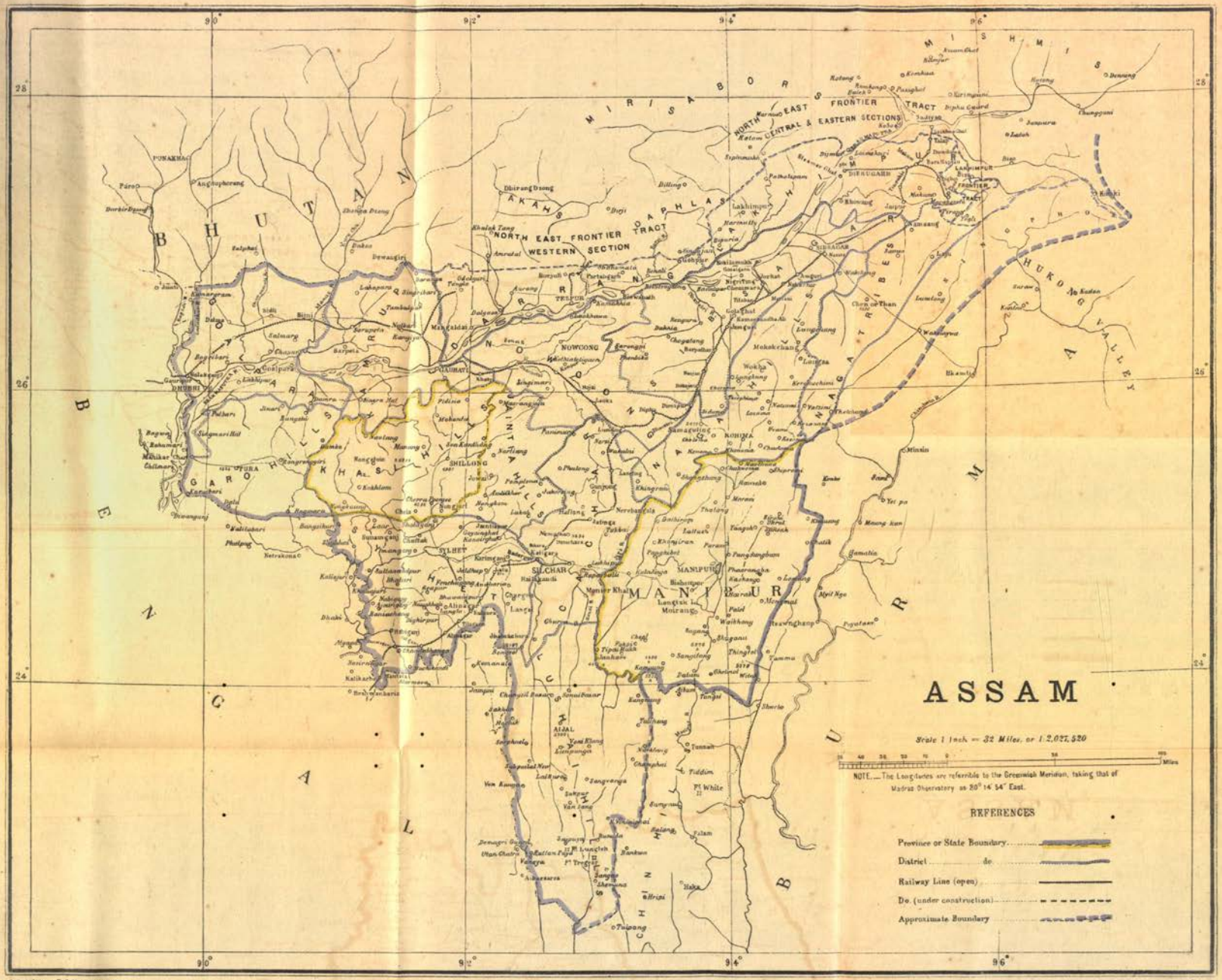
ASSAM
Scale 1 Inch = 32 Miles, or 1:2,027,520
NOTE.—The Longitudes are referrible to the Greenwich Meridian, taking that of Madras Observatory as 80° 14′ 54″ East.
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Province or State Boundary
District do.
Railway Line (open)
Do. (under construction)
Approximate Boundary
BHUTAN
BENGAL
MISHMIS
MIRI SA BORS
NORTH EAST FRONTIER TRACT
NORTH EAST FRONTIER WESTERN SECTION
NORTH CENTRAL & EASTERN SECTIONS
DAFLAS
AKAS
ABORS
MISHMIS
MIRIS
NAGAS
KHASIS
GARO HILLS
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LUSHAI HILLS
NAGA HILLS
MANIPUR
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Pt White 21
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Pt Tregor
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Pt Tairi
Pt Tairi

REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION OF ASSAM

FOR THE YEAR

1916-1917.

PART II.—Report.

CHAPTER I.

PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY.

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SECTION 1.—Physical Features of the Country, Area, Climate and Chief States.

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[See General Administration Report, 1911-1912, Part II, pages 1-75.]

SECTION 7.—CHANGES IN THE ADMINISTRATION.

Changes in the Administration.

1. No administrative changes of importance were introduced during the year. The Hon'ble Sir Archdale Earle, K. C. I. E., held charge of the Administration throughout the year.

EFFECTS OF THE WAR ON THE ADMINISTRATION.

Effects of the war on the Administration.

2. The absence of panic or excitement which was mentioned in last year's report was again a noticeable feature of the year. The high prices prevailing in many of the district bazars caused some disquietude and after the close of the year were responsible for disturbances in the district of Goalpara. Apart from such incidents, the attitude of the general populace remained unchanged and outwardly at any rate there was little indication that the inhabitants of the province were affected adversely by the abnormal conditions of the time, though the shortness of shipping caused considerable embarrassment to the Tea Planters, who found it difficult to sell their stocks. The continuance of the policy of rigid economy in the administration and the postponement of all schemes and projects with the exception of those which were imperative and unavoidable facilitated the release of a large number of Government servants for military duties. Up to September 1917, 129 officials and 217 non-officials had joined either the Indian Army Reserve of Officers or the regular army, while 3,028 officers and men of the Assam Rifles and of the Assam Civil Police had gone on service. A labour corps, 2,000 strong, for service in France was raised in Manipur and in each of the districts of the Naga Hills, the Lushai Hills and the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, and a large number of Garos were recruited for the combined Garo-Sylhetti corps. Owing to a change of policy the last mentioned corps was not completed, but after the close of the year one company, 500 strong, of Garos and Nepalese went to France, and the

Sylhettis contributed three sections of a labour corps for Mesopotamia. A ready response was forthcoming from the province as a whole to the calls which were made upon it for subscriptions to the various war funds. Mr. R. Henderson, C.I.E., contributed a sum of Rs. 31,000 for the purchase of an aeroplane and His Highness the Raja of Manipur was distinguished by the assistance which he afforded in raising the Manipuri Labour Corps and in the readiness with which he complied with every suggestion for the provision of help in men and money from the resources of his State

SECTION 8.—Frontier Relations and Feudatory States.

[See General Administration Report for 1911-12, Part II, pages 76-85.]

SECTION 9.—Relations with Tributary States and Frontier Tribes.

FEUDATORY STATES.

MANIPUR.

[Tribute :—Rupees 50,000. Population (1911) :—346,222. Average gross revenue for last five years :—Rupees 5,86,979. Military Police :—Sanctioned strength 7 officers and 223 men. Products :—Rice, vegetables, sugarcane, tobacco, wax, tea-seed and other forest products, ponies and catt'e. Manufactures :—Silk, cotton cloth, brass and other metal utensils, mustard oil, a few articles of ivory and jewellery, some leather work and coarse salt. Minerals :—Iron, limestone and copper.]

[Raja :—His Highness Raja Chura Chand Singh, aged 31 years, caste Kshatriya. His Highness has three daughters by his first wife Rani Ngangbom Dhanamanjuri Ibemacha ; two sons, aged 9 and 6 years, by his second wife Rani Chingakhom Sayama Sakhi ; one daughter by his third wife Rani Ngangbom Preo Sakhi ; and one son, aged 3 years, by his fifth wife Rani Haobam Lilabati. His Highness' second daughter, aged six years, died during the year.]

General. 3. The rules for the administration of the State were revised, His Highness the Raja relinquishing the presidency of the Durbar, and the former Vice-President becoming President. There were no internal disturbances, and the most note-worthy events of the year were those connected with the assistance given by the State in the war. The Raja raised for military service a double company of Manipuris, which was sent to Lansdowne for training ; a labour corps, 2,000 strong, composed chiefly of men of the hill tribes, was raised for service in France ; and His Highness made a donation of Rs. 22,500 for the purchase of an aeroplane for the army.

Hill Tribes. 4. The conduct of the hill tribes was generally satisfactory, but a serious riot took place at Mao in which over 100 persons were injured, of whom three succumbed to their injuries. A guard was posted at Mao to prevent a recurrence of these disturbances. The villages concerned were also sentenced to pay a fine and to supply punitive labour. The Tangkhuis of Somra Khulen in the unadministered area abducted three women from a village in the Manipur State, but their return was effected by the Burma authorities. Towards the close of the year there was disquiet in the hills in connection with the raising of the labour corps. This was allayed and the corps was completed, but the opposition of the Kuki chiefs to recruiting has not yet been overcome.

Administration of the land revenue. 5. During the year 5,046 *bighas* of waste land were taken up for cultivation and 420 *bighas* of settled land were relinquished. The demand on account of land revenue including arrears was Rs. 4,69,822, and of this Rs. 3,32,968 or 70·87 per cent. were collected, Rs. 63,958 were remitted, and Rs. 72,227 remained outstanding. House-tax was levied at the usual rate of Rs. 3 on all houses in the hills and annas ten on the houses of all Nagas and Kukis cultivating land in the valley or Jiribam. The demand, including arrears of Rs. 5,464, was Rs. 78,234 of which Rs. 71,684 were collected.

Production and trade. 6. The area under rice cultivation was estimated at 144,463 acres and for all other crops together at 13,223 acres. The harvest suffered greatly from floods in October which affected almost all the arable land in the valley and severely damaged over 35,000 acres of paddy, and there would have been a shortage of rice but for an embargo on export, which was maintained up to the end of the year and kept prices normal. Considerable damage also was done by the floods to buildings, bridges and roads. Rupees 11,295 were spent by the State within the year on the relief of distress due to the floods in addition to the remission of Rs. 60,487 of current land revenue. Sericulture operations proved a failure owing to inclement weather, and the State Khuga plantation was abandoned. The Bombay-Burma Trading Corporation, Limited, felled and logged most of the teak trees on the borders of Kabaw Valley remaining from those girdled in 1912-13. During the year 3,264 cattle (including

buffaloes) and 118 ponies were exported, of which 1.699 and 24, respectively, were brought from Burma. The embargo on the export of indigenous cattle was kept in force.

Justice. 7. The number of offences reported fell from 760 to 703 and the number of persons brought to trial from 1,203 to 1,033 : of these persons, 346 were convicted and 512 were acquitted or discharged. The Civil Courts disposed of 4,314 suits of an aggregate value of Rs. 2,11,356 as against 3,551 in the preceding year, and of 574 applications for execution of decrees.

Finance. 8. The gross total revenue of the State, excluding the water rate, was Rs. 5,99,855 as against Rs. 6,40,225 in the previous year. Forests, owing chiefly to the royalty on teak, showed an improvement of Rs. 17,254, and there was a substantial increase under the heads of "Foreigners' tax," "Jail" and "Miscellaneous," but this was more than balanced by the falling off in land and fishery revenue due to floods. The "cart and cattle taxes" were imposed for the first time during the year under report and His Highness has devoted the whole of the proceeds of these taxes to objects in connection with the war. The total expenditure was Rs. 7,17,035 against Rs. 6,47,904 in the previous year. In this was included a sum of Rs. 22,500 paid for the purchase of an aeroplane presented by His Highness the Raja to the Imperial Government, and a further sum of Rs. 30,786 met from the loan granted by Government for the relief of distress and repair of the damage caused by the floods. At the close of the year the State was indebted to Government to the extent of Rs. 2,54,199, Rs. 1,29,499 being on account of the water-works loan and Rs. 1,25,000 on account of the floods. The closing balance excluding the sum of Rs. 33,800 invested in the Government four per cent Terminable loan of 1915-16 was Rs. 3,47,220, including Rs. 17,809 on account of the water rate.

Miscellaneous. 9. Malaria and pyrexia of uncertain origin broke out in epidemic form throughout the valley and were unusually prevalent. Out of 12,959 vaccinations, 12,036 were successful. Lower primary education is free but not compulsory, and the cost to the State on all accounts of education was Rs. 50,144.

FRONTIER TRIBES.

General. 10. During the year under report no operations beyond the frontier were undertaken, with the exception of a short visit paid by the Assistant Political Officer, Pasighat, to the Taikhel of the Galong Abors, and a tour across the Sibsagar frontier in connection with the payment of compensation to certain Naga chiefs owing to the alteration of the Inner Line in 1910. No epidemics were reported from the hills, but a plague of rats and mice did great damage to the crops in the Dafla and the Miri hills, and food was somewhat scarce. The Political Officers continued to improve relations with the tribes under their control.

Bhutias. 11. The usual fair was held at Darranga and was attended by more than 3,000 Bhutias. The returns showed a continued decrease in trade.

Monbas. 12. The usual fair was held at Odalguri and the customary *posa* of Rs. 5,000 was paid to the two Jongpens of Taklungjong. Two members of the important Hlagyary family came to pay a visit to the Political Officer on their way to Gaya on a pilgrimage. The Rupa and Sherpa Monbas received their *posa* at their winter village of Doimara.

Akas 13. The Akas showed more signs of improvement than any of the other hill tribes. They have made good use of the English vegetable seed and potatoes given them, have built stone bridges on the mule track from their chief village to the plains and have sent some of their young men to the Political Officer's headquarters to learn to read and write.

Daflas and Miri Abors. 14. The Western Daflas caused no trouble, but there were two raids by the Eastern Daflas. One occurred in October 1916, when a small party of Daflas raided the coolie lines of the Harmuty tea garden, killed two coolies, wounded a third, and burnt five coolie houses. Seven men connected with this affair were arrested and lodged in the North Lakhimpur Jail. The other disturbance was in March 1917, when a few Daflas carried off three persons to the hills from a plains Dafla village. None of the guilty villages could be revisited. Thirty-nine Daflas came down from the hills and settled in the plains. The Hill Miris came down to the plains in larger number than usual and showed a friendly disposition. They received their customary *posa*.

Apa Tanangs. 15. The Dafla, who was captured by the Apa Tanangs last year, has not yet been returned. These people came down to the plains in larger numbers than usual.

Abors.

16. Some men were seized in British territory by the Tai Khel of the Galong Abors. The villages concerned were visited by the Assistant Political Officer, Pasighat, and two of the ring leaders were arrested. Some punishment was inflicted on their villages on the spot as a measure to restrain them from offences of this nature in the future.

Mishmis.

17. Three cases of the bartering of slaves in British territory were reported. Of the four men seized, one was returned and another escaped. The three Bebejiyas concerned in the capture of a Taroan, which was reported last year, came in when summoned. They were ordered to pay a fine of one mythan each and allowed to go back. The fine has not yet been paid. The Chulikata and Bebejiya Mishmis gave no trouble and the number of those who came down to trade was above the average.

Khamtis and Singphos.

18. The Khamtis and Singphos were quiet.

Margherita, Rangpang, Barduaria, Namsangiya and Barmithonia Nagas.

19. A few cases of theft of iron from the Tirap Colliery were reported, but the offenders were not apprehended. The Rangpangs were suspected and were ordered not to enter British territory. Some of them disregarded the order and were caught and punished by detention in jail. The conduct of the other tribes was good.

Naga Hills.

20. Though there were disturbances beyond the frontier, the relations between Government and the trans-frontier chiefs were most friendly and many of the villages beyond the frontier sent in contingents to the Naga Labour Corps for service in France. A tour across the Sibsagar frontier in connection with the payment of compensation owing to the alteration of the Inner Line in 1910 was undertaken and friendly relations were established with several unadministered Naga villages. The villages of Melomi and Primi of their own free-will cleared a trace for a bridle path from the boundary of the district to the Tizu ford. All the Lhotas and the majority of the Semas responded readily to the request for volunteers for the Naga Labour Corps, and the Aos also sent a certain number of men.

Khasi and Jaintia Hills.

21. The relations between the Siem of Mylliem and his subjects were, generally speaking, satisfactory, though a few of the Siem's relatives and myntris were still inclined to show a spirit of perverse and factious opposition to the Siem's authority. The opponents of the Siem of Mawsynram adopted an attitude of sullen opposition and the raiyats were warned that if the Siem's authority were openly defied and flouted in future, the culprits would be deported from the State. The extraction of corundum at Nongmaweit for the manufacture of munitions was facilitated by the efforts of the Siems in raising a large number of coolies for work in the mines. The whole district responded to the call for men for the Khasi Labour Corps.

Lushai Hills, Garo Hills, and Hill Tippera.

22. Politically the year was uneventful in the Lushai Hills, except that Lungchoi, a village in the Lungleh subdivision, was raided by an armed party from the unadministered village of Chapi. The persons carried off were all returned. A Lushai Labour Corps for work in France was raised with remarkable promptitude. The Garos were quiet and well-behaved and a large number of Garos were recruited for the combined Garo-Sylhetti Labour Corps. Relations with the Raja of Hill Tippera continued to be friendly.

SECTION 10.—CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

See Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1916-17.]

Condition the people.

23. The inhabitants of Cachar and the northern and eastern parts of Sylhet again suffered severely from the floods which occurred in the beginning of October and caused serious damage to the crops. Relief operations were organized on a large scale. Agricultural loans were distributed liberally and large sums were disbursed in the shape of gratuitous relief. Suspensions of land revenue and local rates were allowed in the affected areas. The distress in parts of Cachar was widespread, but the recuperative powers of the district coupled with the relief measures taken were successful in effecting a rapid recovery and there is reason to hope that normal conditions will be restored by one good crop of winter rice. With the exception of Karimganj and parts of the North Sylhet and South Sylhet subdivisions which suffered from the effects of the October floods, the material condition of the people of Sylhet was in a marked degree better than in the preceding year. In the North Cachar Hills the people generally fared well and the outturn of the crops was normal.

In the Assam Valley, the year was, on the whole, unfavourable, and damage was done to the crops in many districts by periods of drought and heavy autumnal rains. In Nowgong the people suffered severely from cattle-disease, insect pests, and the

disastrous flood of the Kopili river in October 1916. In Sibsagar also the effects of the floods of the preceding year and of a virulent outbreak of cattle-disease were still noticeable. Elsewhere in this valley, except Kamrup, the condition of the people was on the whole not unsatisfactory.

The price of rice in the Surma Valley rose sharply during the short period for which railway communications were interrupted, but, on their restoration, the importation of large quantities of Rangoon rice soon had a steadying effect. There was no marked rise in the price of other commodities in the Surma Valley. In the Assam Valley, the price of rice was high throughout the year in nearly all districts. The migration of cultivators from Eastern Bengal into the Assam Valley and the Sunamganj subdivision of the Sylhet district continued. The influx of Santhals from Bengal and Nepalese from Nepal into the district of Goalpara was maintained. The immigration from the Surma Valley into the district of Nowgong was checked by the temporary closing of the hill section of the Assam-Bengal Railway.

CHAPTER II.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAND.

SECTION 1.—REALISATION OF THE REVENUE.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1916-17.]

General.

24. An account of the demand and collection of land revenue will be found in Chapter V—"Revenue and Finance." During the year there was an increase of 145 square miles in the settled area and the revenue demand on the current account rose from Rs. 73,43,906* to Rs. 75,55,516, the incidence of revenue per square mile being Rs. 542·16.

Permanently-settled estates.

25. There was no change in the area and revenue demand of the permanently-settled estates in the Assam Valley Division. In the Surma Valley, the total number of these estates increased by 13, but there was a decrease in the area and revenue by 26 acres and Rs. 14, respectively, as compared with the preceding year. Six estates were purchased by Government at the sales held for arrears of revenue and transferred from the "permanently-settled" to the "temporarily-settled" class, while 19 new estates were formed by partition. The acquisition of land for public purposes accounted for the decrease in area and revenue. The total revenue demand amounted to Rs. 4,93,736, of which Rs. 2,68,562 or 71·32 per cent. of the current and Rs. 1,16,870 or 99·74 per cent. of the arrear account were realised, and Rs. 1,09,590 remained outstanding at the close of the year. The district of Sylhet was responsible for the whole of the outstanding balance, which was due to the suspensions of payment which were necessitated by the disastrous floods of October 1916.

Temporarily-settled estates.

26. Temporarily-settled estates, which do not include land held revenue-free or waste land grants, formed 42·80 per cent. of the total settled area of the province and contributed 90·05 per cent. of the total revenue demand. The total area settled at full rates for ordinary cultivation in the Surma Valley and Hill Districts Division decreased from 750,289 acres to 750,182 acres, while the revenue demand assessed thereon increased from Rs. 8,17,494 to Rs. 8,17,897. In the Khasi and Jaintia Hills there was an increase of 202 acres in the area settled and of Rs. 1,592 in revenue, due mainly to the settlement of new lands for wet rice cultivation in the Jowai subdivision. In Sylhet the area settled decreased by 796 acres and the revenue demand assessed thereon by Rs. 100. In the Assam Valley Districts Division, the total fully-assessed area settled for ordinary cultivation increased by 65,717 acres and the revenue demand assessed thereon by Rs. 1,96,646. There was an increase in the settled area and revenue in all districts, which was most marked in the district of Kamrup, where the area and revenue increased by 19,091 acres and Rs. 96,947, respectively, as the result mainly of the immigration of Muhammadans from Bengal into the Barpeta subdivision and of the revision of the classification of the lands taken up in surveyed villages since the last resettlement. The immigration of Santhals from Bengal into the Eastern Duars of the Goalpara district was responsible for an increase of 2,911 acres in area and of Rs. 3,882 in revenue in this district. In Darrang the influx of new settlers from Bengal and in Nowgong the extension of cultivation and the colonisation of waste lands by immigrants from Eastern Bengal and the Surma Valley were responsible for the increase in area and revenue. In the districts of Sibsagar and Lakhimpur the increase in the settled area and revenue was ascribed to the extension of cultivation, and in the case of Sibsagar, also to the revision of the classification of the lands taken up in surveyed villages since the last resettlement. The extension of survey operations and of cultivation was responsible for the increase in area and revenue in the Garo Hills district. The current demand rose from Rs. 69,67,321 to Rs. 71,78,945. Collections showed a further decrease, 89·87 per cent. of the current and 78·48 per cent. of the arrear demand being realised as against 93·03 per cent. and 90·16 per cent., respectively, in 1915-16. Rupees 28,584 were remitted.

Remittance of revenue and local rates by special money-order.

27. The system of remitting revenue and local rates by special money-order is in force in Sylhet only. The number of such money-orders rose from 2,695 to 3,260 and the amount remitted from Rs. 9,607 to Rs. 15,116.

* Excludes quit rent of tributary mahals in Goalpara and zemindars' share of revenue in the Garo Hills district.

28. The number of notices of demand issued decreased from 197 to 107. Such notices are falling into disuse, as mauzadars are empowered to issue orders of attachment. The number of warrants of attachment issued fell from 44,750 to 39,289, a decrease which was shared by all districts except Nowgong. In Nowgong the number of such orders issued rose from 2,476 to 2,654, an increase which was attributed to the fact that the people of the tract affected by the flood of the Kapili river, whose revenue was not suspended, withheld payment. Though the number of sale notices decreased from 13,119 to 12,863, the number of estates actually sold increased from 455 to 536. Coercive means employed for the collection of land revenue.

29. The number of processes issued rose from 204,548 to 210,063, while the fees realised fell from Rs. 1,42,419 to Rs. 1,39,966. Processes.

30. The total demand on account of miscellaneous land revenue rose from Rs. 7,20,092 to Rs. 7,77,175, of which Rs. 7,25,146 or 93·31 per cent. were collected, Rs. 8,898 remitted and Rs. 43,131 remained outstanding. Miscellaneous land revenue.

31. The total amount advanced during the year under the Agriculturists' Loans Act amounted to Rs. 16,12,515 against Rs. 21,42,212 in the preceding year and the amount outstanding at the commencement of the year was Rs. 26,87,636. Of the total of Rs. 43,00,151 outstanding, the amount due for collection within the year was Rs. 15,67,996 inclusive of interest, of which Rs. 3,85,592, excluding an advance collection of Rs. 8,485, were collected and Rs. 314 remitted. Rupees 2,69,836 were suspended and the amount overdue at the end of the year was Rs. 9,12,254, of which Sylhet was responsible for Rs. 7,95,365 and the Lushai Hills for Rs. 72,991. No fresh loans were granted in the Lushai Hills, but the loans outstanding at the commencement of the year amounted to Rs. 4,28,720, of which Rs. 1,72,951 inclusive of interest were due for collection within the year. Excluding an advance collection of Rs. 8,225, a sum of Rs. 51,674 was realised, Rs. 48,266 were suspended and Rs. 72,991 were overdue at the end of the year. The district of Nowgong was seriously affected by the disastrous flood of the Kapili river in October 1916 and a sum of Rs. 1,10,227 was advanced during the year for the relief of distress. Loans.

32. No irrigation or drainage works were undertaken in the Surma Valley, but as a relief work three channels were excavated leading from the Kusiara river in Sylhet with a view to bringing silt on to low-lying land. In the Assam Valley, the six river side embankments in the district of Sibsagar were maintained by the Public Works Department and the slight breaches which occurred in the Desang and Dehing *bunds* caused no serious damage to crops. The steps taken to prevent the erosion of the red road in the town of Dibrugarh were successful, but the river bank at the steamerghat below the town was so badly cut that the removal of the workshop station of the Dibrugarh-Sadiya Railway was necessary. Other revenue work.

33. Omitting summary partitions under rule 203 of the Land Records Manual, 245 partition cases were instituted during the year. Of the total of 546 cases, including 301 pending from the previous year, 339 cases were disposed of and 207 cases remained pending at the close of the year. Partitions.

SECTION 2.—SURVEYS AND SETTLEMENTS.

[*See* Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in Assam for 1916-17.]

34. The temporary arrangement under which the Assam Surveys were placed under the control of the Superintendent, Eastern Circle, Survey of India, as an experimental measure, was maintained during the year. Survey.

In the Goalpara district 16 linear miles of the Sidli-Chirang boundary were traversed and 40 miles of the Khuntaghat-Sidli boundary were permanently demarcated. The resurvey of the Goalpara-Garo Hills district boundary was completed during the year. The extension traverse of 34 villages in Kamrup, covering an area of 149 square miles, 90 villages in Darrang comprising an area of 105 square miles and 7 villages in Sibsagar covering an area of 9 square miles was carried out. In the Khasi and Jaintia Hills district the permanent demarcation of the Shella-Mawlong boundary was completed. In the Garo Hills district 146 villages covering an area of 39 square miles were traversed.

In Sylhet 17 linear miles of the boundary of Thâk No. 1743 were re-traversed and the traversing of 38·19 linear miles of block A of the Dohaliya Hills was finished. In the same district, the temporary demarcation of about 4 miles of the Sylhet-Hill Tippera boundary was completed.

The Shillong Drawing Office printed 85,765 copies of maps for Assam, of which 58,675 were village maps. Survey gazetteers of the Sylhet and Goalpara districts were

published during the year. In the survey school near Gauhati, 21 pupils appeared in the Mandals' Certificate Examination, of whom 17 were successful. One junior civilian and four Sub-Deputy Collectors underwent a course of training in survey and settlement work. One Deputy Ranger from the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and three Amins from the Manipur State were also trained in surveying.

Settlement.

35. The resettlement of the Cachar district was in progress during the year. Mr. W. L. Scott was in charge of the settlement operations. In May last he was appointed Deputy Commissioner of Cachar in addition to his settlement duties and since then the detail work of the settlement has been carried on mainly by Rai Sahib Debendra Kumar Mukherjee, Assistant Settlement Officer. The subordinate staff was the same as last year. The programme for the year was (*a*) the submission of the assessment reports of the remaining groups, *viz.*, those of Silchar, Chatla, Banraj, and Vernerpur, (*b*) the revenue attestation of all the six groups, (*c*) the completion of the final records, *viz.*, maps, *dagchithas*, and *jamabandis* of all the groups, and (*d*) the distribution of the final *pattas*.

Though there was considerable delay in the submission of the assessment reports on account of the interruptions caused by the floods of October 1916, they were completed and the sanction of the Local Administration to the new rates of assessment was accorded for all the 6 groups of the district. Proposals for the assessment of the land under tea and waste in tea gardens held under Mirasdari leases were submitted to the Local Administration. Orders were passed by the Commissioner on the proposals for the settlement of the 2nd-class fisheries in the Katigora, Silchar, Hailakandi and Vernerpur groups. Revenue attestation was completed in almost all villages of all the groups except Vernerpur. The programme of office work was heavy and progress was much hampered by the flood relief work. During the year, assessment statements for the Silchar, Chatla, Banraj and Vernerpur groups and the revenue calculation of all the remaining groups were completed except in the case of tea and waste lands in tea gardens for which new rates have recently been approved. In connection with the preparation of the final records, the fairing of the *dagchitha* was done for all the groups except 8 villages, and the copying of the *jamabandi* register for 377 villages and final *pattas* for 324 villages was completed during the year. The calculation of revenue on the new *pattas* at the rates previously in force for the purpose of giving effect to the rules relating to deferred enhancement was finished for the Katigora, Chatla, Banraj and Hailakandi groups and the greater portion of the Silchar group. The final inking of maps was completed and 649 maps were sent during the year for reproduction. There was practically no mutation work during the year; this work should be taken up as early as possible. Resettlement work is expected to be closed down from the 31st December 1917, and whatever work remains to be done after that date will be done under the orders of the Deputy Commissioner by the ordinary Land Records staff.

Jaintia.

36. *Jaintia.*—Mr. W. L. Scott was in charge of the operations throughout the year. Rai Sahib Debendra Kumar Mukherjee, Assistant Settlement Officer, Cachar, was also appointed to be Assistant Settlement Officer, Jaintia parganas, with a view to exercising subordinate control and relieving the Settlement Officer of routine work. The strength of the subordinate staff remained unchanged throughout the year. The programme for the year was the revenue attestation and final preparation of the records of the Gowainghat group and the completion and submission of the assessment reports of the Jaintiapur and Kanairghat groups. The revenue attestation of Gowainghat was completed and good progress was made with the work of preparing the new *jamabandis* and final *pattas*. The assessment reports for the Jaintiapur and Kanairghat groups were submitted in July and August, respectively, and the proposed new rates were published for criticism about the end of the settlement year. The preparation of the new records was in progress. All the new maps were completed during the year and were sent to the Drawing Office for reproduction. Proposals for the resettlement of the *mahal samil jalkar* of the Gowainghat group have been submitted to the Commissioner of the division. The work remaining to be done comprises the revenue attestation of the Jaintiapur and Kanairghat groups, the completion of the new records and the submission of proposals for the resettlement of *mahal samil jalkar* in the Jaintiapur and Kanairghat groups and for the resettlement of land under tea and waste land in tea estates. The work is well advanced and should be completed by March or April 1918.

Dassana Settlement, Sylhet.

37. In that part of the permanently-settled tract in Sylhet which has been taken up experimentally for survey and settlement work, the operations were finished in August last with the exception of the hearing of cases under sections 105 and 106 of the Bengal Tenancy Act, VIII of 1885, which was commenced by a Munsif on deputation

from Bengal after the Civil Court vacation. The final publication of the records was completed in the middle of July and the Settlement Officer, Mr. C. Gimson, reverted to general duty in the 1st week of August. The record was handed over to the Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet by the middle of August and the two Assistant Settlement Officers reverted to general duty. The Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet was notified as Settlement Officer for the area under section 108A and the District Judge as special judge under section 109A of the Bengal Tenancy Act.

The work in connection with the revision of classification in areas taken up after resettlement in the districts of Sibsagar and Kamrup, which was begun last year, was completed during this year.

Extension surveys were carried out by local agency in the districts of Sylhet, Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang, Nowgong, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur, the area surveyed being about 211 square miles.

SECTION 3—LAND RECORDS.

Land Records.

38. There was no change in the sanctioned strength of Kanungos, but an addition of 5 recorders was made to the Nowgong Land Records staff. In spite of the continued efforts to secure resident recorders for lots in all the districts, their number declined to 778 against 793 in the preceding year and 806 in the year before last.

SECTION 4.—SETTLEMENT FOR SPECIAL CULTIVATION (WASTE LANDS).

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1916-17.]

Settlement for special cultivation.

39. The total area settled for special cultivation, including the North-East Frontier Tract, increased by 26,029 acres to 1,203,040 acres and the revenue demand assessed thereon by Rs. 15,631 to Rs. 7,77,106. The increase in area and revenue occurred chiefly in the districts of Darrang, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur and was due mainly to new settlements, progressive assessment, and the re-assessment of time-expired grants at full rates.

SECTION 5.—GOVERNMENT ESTATES.

Nil.

SECTION 6.—WARDS' AND ATTACHED ESTATES.

[See Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1916-17].

General.

40. The assumption of charge of the estates of Babu Banka Behari Das and of the heirs of the late Babu Surja Kumar Das, Sylhet, and of the Mechpara Estate in Goalpara raised the number of estates under the management of the Court of Wards from 9 to 12. The Mechpara Estate came under the Court of Wards on the 14th April 1917 in accordance with an order of the District Judge, Assam Valley Districts, passed under section 95 of the Bengal Tenancy Act, 1885. The post of General Manager in Sylhet, which was abolished after the close of the year, was held in abeyance during the year. No estate was released during the year.

Revenue and rent cesses.

41. Of a total sum of Rs. 27,735 due to Government on current and arrear demand as revenue and cesses, Rs. 24,285 were paid. Of the balance of Rs. 3,450 outstanding, Rs. 2,151 were due from the Khan Bahadur Ward's Estate. A sum of Rs. 4,967 on account of rent and cesses due to superior landlords was similarly left unpaid by the same estate.

Collections.

42. The total demand on account of rents and cesses due to the estates, including an arrear demand of Rs. 4,58,887, amounted to Rs. 7,91,231. Of this sum, Rs. 2,22,485, or 66 94 per cent. of the current demand, were collected. All the estates except the Ilias Ali Estate were responsible for the poor collections. In the case of the Birasri Wards' Estate the collections amounted to only 8 29 per cent. of the current demand. The disastrous floods of 1915 and 1916 were mainly responsible for this unsatisfactory state of affairs. In the Prithimpassa Wards' Estate the poor collection was also due in part to disputes with co-sharers and other local mirasdars about the possession of, and title to, certain areas.

Debts.

43. The debts of the Kumar Ward's Estate were reduced by Rs. 31,683. In the Khan Bahadur Ward's Estate the repayment was Rs. 3,426 only. Owing to the short collections, the Prithimpassa Wards' Estate, which was solvent, had to borrow Rs. 25,000 to meet the expenses incidental to the marriage of the senior ward and the marriage dowry of his wife.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAND.

Management charges and improvement.

44. The percentage of the cost of management to the current demand fell from 16·80 to 13·64. The decrease is due mainly to the fact that the post of General Manager was held in abeyance during the year and his staff abolished.

The Prithimpasa Estate spent Rs. 3,478 on schools, dispensaries, and other works of public utility. The estate of Kumar Gopika Raman Ray contributed a sum of Rs. 11,801 towards the maintenance of the Raja Girish Chandra High School at Sylhet.

SECTION 7.—REVENUE AND RENT-PAYING CLASSES.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1916-17.]

Relations between landlords and tenants.

45. The Special Officer deputed to enquire into, and report on, the defects of the existing rent law in the permanently-settled estates of the district of Goalpara submitted his report during the year. His proposals for the introduction of tenancy legislation are under the consideration of the Local Administration.

Rent receipts.

46. The question of legislation to regulate the grant of rent receipts in Sylhet was under consideration. The report of the Settlement Officer is awaited.

CHAPTER III.

PROTECTION.

SECTION 1.—Legislative Authority.

[See General Administration Report for 1911-12, Part II, pages 92-94.]

SECTION 2.—Course of Legislation.

47. The Assam Medical Act of 1916 and the Assam Local Self-Government (Amendment) Act of 1916 which provides for the construction and control of tramways on Local Board roads, were passed by the Assam Legislative Council during the year.

The Bengal Vaccination Act, V of 1880, was extended to the Nazira and Mangaldai Unions.

The provisions of Part X of Act III (B.C.) of 1884 were extended to the Goalpara Municipality and those of Part VII and of section 241 of the Act to the Tezpur Municipality. Part IX of the Act, excluding section 332, was extended to the Sibsagar Municipality and Part IX to the Sylhet Municipality. The provisions of sections 224 to 232, 236 to 244, 266, 267 and 270 to 273 were extended to the Jorhat Municipality, and the provisions of several sections of Part VI were extended to the Silchar, Habiganj Sunamganj, and Shillong Municipalities, and to certain areas of the Sylhet Municipality. The provisions of sections 254 to 260A were extended to the town of Sunamganj.

The provisions of Act IV (B.C.) of 1873 were extended to the Mangaldai Union.

All the Parts of Act III (B.C.) of 1884, except Parts VII and VIII, were extended to the Nowgong Municipality.

Sections 93 to 100 of the Bengal Tenancy Act, VIII of 1885, were extended to the permanently-settled parganas in the district of Goalpara.

SECTION 3.—Police.

ASSAM RIFLES.

Personnel.

48. Captain (now Major) F. K. Hensley and Captain T. A. Digby were granted leave on medical grounds, during the year. Captain E. L. D. Fordyce died suddenly on the 5th December after a brief illness. Captain J. S. Ring reverted to military duty on the 2nd January 1917. Mr. J. H. Crace, Assistant Superintendent of Police and temporary Assistant Commandant of the Lushai Hills Battalion, was appointed to the Indian Army Reserve of Officers.

The total number of volunteers from the Assam Rifles sent to Gurkha Regiments during the year was 1,294, and after the close of the year another draft of 201 officers and men was despatched, bringing the total of volunteers serving with Gurkha Regiments to 2,749 officers and men.

Strength and distribution.

49. The enlistment of recruits rose from 1,597 in 1915 to 2,493 in 1916. The large increase is due to recruiting to fill the places of drafts sent to Gurkha Regiments and to the strength of each Battalion being raised to 1,000 rifles as a temporary measure to facilitate the training and despatch of drafts to the Regular Army. The percentage of Gurkhas enlisted was 89·45 against 80·95 in 1915.

Efficiency.

50. The Chief Commissioner inspected the Naga Hills and the Darrang Battalions and was favourably impressed with their efficiency. The other battalions and the detachment at Silchar, as well as the Naga Hills and Darrang Battalions, were inspected by the Inspector General of Police with equally satisfactory results.

Casualties.

51. Casualties decreased under the heads "Retirement," "Resignation," and "Failure of men to join on return from leave," but increased under the heads "Dismissals," "Discharges," "Desertions" and "Deaths." The large increase under the head "Discharge" was chiefly due to the discharge of recruits on medical grounds. The increase in "desertions" is attributed to the fact that some of the recruits were of an inferior standard.

Health.

52. The number of deaths increased from 25 to 43 and the percentage of admissions into hospital to the actual strength from 48·12 to 71·55. Pneumonia was responsible for the large number of deaths, and the increase in admissions into hospital was due to the spread of Naga sores contracted by the men enlisted in the coal fields and also to dysentery and malaria during the rains.

PROTECTION.

Military operations and Frontier outposts.

53. No military operations were undertaken during the year, but escorts were supplied as usual to Political Officers on their tours.

Owing to the demand for volunteers for service with the Regular Army and the consequent shortage of trained soldiers, it was not possible to keep all the outposts up to sanctioned strength. The garrisons at Mokokchang and Wakching were reduced from 50 to 25 rifles and a temporary reduction was also made in the case of Lungleh and Tuipang. No garrisons were provided for Balek, Defu, Karimpani and Dijmur, and the guards at Singlijan, Tezpur, North Vonlaiphai and Champhai were temporarily withdrawn. A punitive guard was stationed at Mao thana in Manipur to prevent rioting between certain villages, and an outpost was temporarily established at Denning.

CIVIL POLICE.

Strength.

54. The sanctioned strength of the force was increased by 25 officers and men during the year. Three hundred and twenty-eight men were recruited, of whom 242 were enlisted locally. The gradual increase in the number of local recruits from 66·4 per cent. in 1915 to 73·7 per cent. is satisfactory and is probably due to the recent increase of pay. The system of drilling Sub-Inspectors at the headquarters of the district and men at police stations was continued with good results. The reports on the work of the circle Inspectors and the investigating staff were satisfactory.

Conduct.

55. Except in the Kamrup district, the standard of discipline in the civil police showed a considerable improvement. No officer was judicially convicted, but the number of men so punished rose from 60 in 1915 to 71 during the year. Departmental punishments fell from 1,036 to 937. The number of criminal charges brought against the police was 76 against 99 in the preceding year. Fifty-four of these were charges of minor offences, such as assault, confinement, etc., and 22 charges of torture, extortion and bribery. The only charge of torture was found to be false. Of the 12 cases of extortion, 6 were decided as false, and 3 as doubtful, one was under enquiry at the close of the year, one was found to be true and the remaining case ended in the conviction of one constable. Of the 9 cases of bribery, 6 were decided as false, one as doubtful and 2 as true. No case ended in conviction. There were 3 civil suits against one Sub-Inspector and four constables, one of which was dismissed as false, one was struck off as the plaintiff did not prosecute it, and the plaintiff in the third case died and his son withdrew the suit.

Health.

56. The number of admissions to hospital rose from 1,275 in 1915 to 1,384 during the year, but the number of deaths fell from 50 to 32. Only 10 deaths occurred in police hospitals. Twenty out of the 32 deaths were from malarial fever.

In consultation with the Inspector General of Civil Hospitals steps were taken to supply mosquito nets at certain unhealthy stations and outposts, where they had hitherto not been provided.

Reserve.

57. The drill, discipline and musketry of the armed reserve was maintained at a satisfactory standard.

The ordinary reserve is inadequate for its duties, but cannot be increased until normal conditions return.

Railway Police.

58. There was no change in the number of officers of the railway police. Missing goods cases increased from 189 to 217 during the year, of which 171 were reported to be criminal against 113 in the preceding year. The increase is attributed mainly to the absence, for a part of the year, of the armed police guard over the rice waggons at Chittagong and other places. Obstruction cases decreased, but there was an increase in the number of cases of running train thefts and stone-throwing. The number of accidents fell from 207 to 199, of which 60 were attended with loss of life.

River Police.

59. The policing of the rivers on the Bengal borders was taken over, a General River Police District formed, and provisional rules issued for its working. The small force of river police did useful work and dealt with one river dacoity and 80 cases of thefts from boats, in spite of the inadequate means of conveyance at its disposal.

Rural Police.

60. Chaukidars exist only in the districts of Sylhet, Cachar and Goalpara, and their work is reported to have improved in all three districts. The number of punishments decreased from 55·06 to 53·08 per cent. of the force, but there was also a decrease in the number of rewards.

The number of chaukidars in Sylhet remaining unpaid at the end of the year was still very large.

61. The total net cost of the Department was Rs. 23,80,863 as compared with Rs. 22,89,978 in 1915. The increase was mainly under the head "Special Police" (Assam Rifles), and was due to (1) a general rise in the prices of materials used for clothing and in the prices of accoutrements, etc., (2) reorganisation of the office establishment, (3) increased expenditure on recruitment to fill the vacancies consequent on the despatch of drafts to the Army, (4) Army promotions of certain gazetted officers and (5) the return of the detachment of the Lushai Hills Battalion from Manipur. Finance.

62. The number of cognizable cases increased by 1,461. Of those dealt with by the police, 32·1 per cent. were brought to trial as compared with 36·1 per cent. in 1915. The percentage of convictions increased from 78·9 per cent. in 1915 to 87·2 per cent. in 1916. Crime.

There was an increase of 1,190 cases of serious crime. The increase was mainly under the heads "burglary" and "thefts." The reason assigned for the increase was the high price of food-grains as the result of the unusual floods during the last two years in both Valleys and the influx of wandering gangs of up-country criminal in two districts of the Assam Valley. The number of true cases of dacoity increased from 7 in 1915 to 9 in 1916. Only one case of river dacoity was reported during the year and this ended in the conviction of two persons. There was no gang case during the year, but a gang of Karwal Nuts, which was responsible for an outbreak of crime against property, was successfully prosecuted in the Kamrup district.

The number of cases remanded more than six times increased. The percentage was high in the Darrang district. Provincial statement J.

63. There was no political case of importance during the year under report. Political Crime.

64. There was no change in the sanctioned strength of the Criminal Investigation Department. Some cases of murder, dacoity, coining, embezzlement and 5 insurance fraud cases were dealt with by the Department. Miscellaneous.

The Finger Print Bureau received 1,373 search slips during the year, and previous convictions were traced in 122 cases. The staff remained the same as in the previous year.

SECTION 4.—CRIMINAL JUSTICE.

PLAINS DISTRICTS.

65. The staff employed on criminal work in the plains portion of the province consisted of two Sessions Judges, one Additional Sessions Judge, eight District Magistrates, fifty-one Subordinate Stipendiary Magistrates and twenty-three Honorary Magistrates. Besides the above, a temporary Assistant Sessions Judge was also employed in the Assam Valley. Staff.

The following statement gives the figures for the past three years of offences reported, cases accepted as true, and cases brought to trial, with the ratio of complaints rejected and cases struck off as false to the total number of offences reported and that of persons convicted to those actually brought to trial :—

—	Cases reported.	Cases reported as true.	Cases brought to trial.	Ratio of complaints dismissed.	Ratio of persons convicted.
1	2	3	4	5	6
				Per cent.	
1916	43,111	30,606	20,177	28·9	43·5
1915	41,951	28,649	19,416	32·4	42·2
1914	44,819	28,516	19,746	35·6	41·2

66. Of 33,061 persons tried by Magistrates, 14,384 were convicted, 4,714 on summary and 9,670 on regular trial. Two hundred and twenty cases were committed to the Sessions and 19,823 were finally disposed of; 1,148 cases were pending at the end of the year. Of the cases disposed of, 25·5 per cent. were tried under summary procedure. Magistrates' court.

Sixty-four thousand six hundred and one witnesses were examined. Of these, 66·2 per cent. were discharged on the first day of the trial, and 2,619 as against 1,385 in the previous year, were detained for more than three days.

At the close of the year 2,411 persons were awaiting trial and 152 were in custody.

Magistrates sentenced 3,320 persons to imprisonment, 10,638 to fine, 155 to whipping and ordered 186 persons to fulfil contracts under Act XIII of 1859. The fines imposed amounted to Rs. 1,37,425, of which Rs. 1,17,951 were realized and Rs. 25,182 were paid as compensation to complainants.

Bonds for keeping the peace were taken from 861 persons, and 211 persons were required to furnish security for good behaviour, 135 of whom were sentenced to undergo imprisonment in default. In 105 cases complainants were found to have brought frivolous or vexatious charges and were ordered to pay compensation to the accused.

Courts of Sessions.

67. Two hundred and six cases were disposed of, involving 540 persons, of whom 133 were tried by jury, and 238 with the aid of Assessors. Two hundred and eighty-six persons were convicted, 153 were discharged or acquitted, and in the case of 19 reference was made to the High Court.

Three persons were sentenced to death, but in one case the High Court reduced the sentence to transportation for life.

Twenty persons were sentenced to transportation for life, 250 to rigorous imprisonment and 21 to fine. The Judge disagreed with the verdict of the jury in the case of 50 persons. Reference was made to the High Court under section 307 of the Code of Criminal Procedure with regard to four cases and one such reference was pending at the opening of the year. The verdict of the jury was set aside in two cases and modified in one; one case was remanded for retrial and one was pending at the close of the year.

In trials with the aid of Assessors, the Judge concurred with both Assessors in 165 instances, concurred with one Assessor in 29 and disagreed with both in 44.

The number of witnesses examined was 1,986, of whom 184 or 9·2 per cent. were detained for more than three days. The average duration of cases in Sessions Courts was 40·9 days.

Appellate jurisdiction. The High Courts.

68. The High Court disposed of 69 appeals during the year. The sentences passed in the Sessions Courts were upheld in 58 cases, reversed in 2 and varied in 9. Three appeals remained for disposal at the end of the year.

Sessions Courts.

69. Six hundred and two appeals, involving 1,205 persons, were disposed of, with the result that the original sentences were confirmed in 61·4 per cent., modified in 18·3 per cent. and reversed in 18·8 per cent. of the cases. New trials were ordered in the cases of 19 persons.

Magistrates.

70. District Magistrates disposed of the appeals of 478 persons, dismissing the appeal in 61·7 per cent. of the cases, modifying the original sentence in 5·9 per cent. and reversing it in 3·2 per cent. New trials were ordered in the case of two persons.

Revision.

71. Applications for revision of orders passed by lower courts were decided in 164 cases by the High Court, in 317 cases by the Courts of Sessions, and in 212 cases by District Magistrates.

Receipts and expenditure.

72. The charges incurred in criminal cases in Assam amounted to Rs. 4,01,215 and the receipts to Rs. 2,29,769. The charges exceed those of 1915 by Rs. 7,111 and the receipts show a decrease of Rs. 9,069.

Hill districts and frontier tracts.

73. One thousand and fifty-three cases, involving 1,971 persons, were brought to trial in hill districts and frontier tracts.

In these cases, 1,488 persons were convicted, 402 were acquitted or discharged 14 died, escaped or were transferred and 67 remained under trial at the end of the year. Eighty-nine persons appealed against the sentences or orders of lower courts. In twenty cases the original order was modified and in five cases the order was reversed.

SECTION 5.—JAILS.

[*See* Report on the Jail Administration in the province of Assam for the year 1916; Statistics of British India, Part VI.]

General.

74. There was no change in the number of jails and sub-jails.

Population.

75. The year opened with 2,083 prisoners of all classes against 2,122 in the previous year. The number of admissions rose from 9,738 in 1915 to 10,328 in 1916 and of discharges from 9,777 to 10,227, leaving 2,184 prisoners in confinement at the close of the year. The daily average number of prisoners rose from 2,140·55 to 2,215·44.

Of the total number of convicts admitted into the jails and sub-jails during the year, ·35 per cent. were Christians, 42·38 per cent. Muhammadans, 49·63 per cent.

Hindus and Sikhs, ·27 per cent. Buddhists and Jains and 7·37 per cent. belonged to other classes.

These figures included 116 females and 3 persons under 16 years of age. The percentage of literate convicts was 3·90. Juvenile, female and literate offenders.

76. The daily average number of under-trial prisoners rose from 219·46 to 225·98 and the average period of detention in Magistrates' cases was 13·89 days against 15·96 days in the preceding year. Detention over three months occurred in 6 jails and 3 sub-jails and affected 28 cases. Under-trial prisoners.

77. The number of civil prisoners received during the year was 75, the same as in the previous year. Civil prisoners.

78. The number of escapes was nine. Of these, two occurred from inside and seven from outside the jails. The number of jail offences committed by convicts was 4,090 against 3,702 in 1915. Criminal courts punished 17 convicts, while 2,607 minor and 1,488 major punishments were inflicted by Superintendents of Jails. Discipline.

79. The daily average number of sick fell from 104·91 to 92·17. The death-rate per mille of average strength was 18·51 against 21·49 in 1915. This is the lowest figure on record for Assam, and the marked improvement in the health conditions of jails was due to the co-operation of officers of the department in carrying out the sanitary measures inaugurated by the Inspector General of Prisons two years ago. The number of admissions and deaths from tubercle of the lungs increased from 8 and 4 to 14 and 8, respectively. Separate accommodation for prisoners suffering from this disease is being provided in the new hospital now under construction at Sylhet, and similar provision will be made in the Central Jail which will be constructed at Jorhat. The total accommodation available in jails and sub-jails on the last day of the year was for 2,805 prisoners representing an addition of 118 beds as compared with the previous year. Health.

80. An average of 658·07 or 33·09 per cent. of prisoners was employed on manufactures and 145·40 or 7·49 per cent. on extramural work. The average number of prisoners employed on unremunerative labour increased from 14·81 to 25·49 owing to the failure of several jails to find remunerative work for their prisoners. The gross profits on the employment of convicts in the manufactory department rose from Rs. 47,602 to Rs. 64,813. Employment.

81. The expenditure on guarding and maintaining prisoners, including the cost of buildings and repairs, fell from Rs. 2,69,539 to Rs. 2,55,808, and the average cost per head of average strength from Rs. 125-15-0 to Rs. 115-7-5 as compared with the previous year. The net cost of the department was Rs. 1,98,195 against Rs. 2,33,036, and the net cost per head of average strength was Rs. 89-8-0 against Rs. 108-14-0 in 1915. Finance.

SECTION 6.—CIVIL JUSTICE.

PLAINS DISTRICTS.

82. The civil judicial staff of the province consisted of two District Judges, one Additional District Judge, nine Subordinate Judges and thirty-one Munsifs. Of these, two Subordinate Judges and ten Munsifs employed in the district of Sylhet were members of the Judicial Branch of the Bengal Provincial Civil Service, and the remainder were executive officers vested with civil judicial powers. The temporary staff consisted of a Subordinate Judge and a Munsif. Staff.

83. The number of original suits instituted was 40,189, a decrease of 929 over the figures of the previous year due to a great falling off in Sylhet, where the people were very badly off and the number of suits for disposal was 51,601, a decrease of 2,690. Of these, 41,606 were disposed of or 2,274 less than in the previous year. There was an increase in disposals in the Assam Valley and Cachar, but in Sylhet there was a decrease of 2,731. The number of pending cases fell from 10,410 to 9,997. The number of pending cases over one year rose from 219 to 249. Of the suits instituted 29,157 were for money or moveables, 6,939 were rent suits, and 4,093 title and other suits. There was a decrease in the average duration of suits before all courts except in the case of uncontested suits under the ordinary procedure before Subordinate Judges. Of the total number of suits disposed of, 65·2 per cent. resulted in favour of the plaintiff, 25·9 per cent. in favour of the defendant, and the rest were compromised. Suits.

Execution proceedings.

84. Of the total number of applications for execution on the files, 23,070 were disposed of. Full satisfaction was obtained in 2,842 and partial satisfaction in 4,29 cases, the total amount realized being Rs. 6,16,411. In 69 per cent. of cases the proceedings were infructuous.

Miscellaneous.

85. The number of miscellaneous cases of a Judicial nature instituted during the year was 4,335. 4,396 cases were disposed of and 839 cases were pending at the close of the year.

Of non-judicial cases mainly for deposit of rent, institutions numbered 386 and disposals 379.

Appeals (*a*) in the High Court.

86. There were 266 appeals from decrees before the High Court. Of these, 11 were decided, the decree of the lower court being reversed in 11, and confirmed in 3 cases. Thirteen cases were remanded to the lower courts.

(*b*) in Courts subordinate to the High Court.

87. The number of appeals before civil courts was 2,249, of which 1,519 were disposed of, leaving 751 appeals pending at the close of the year. Of the pending appeals, 48 were pending for over a year as compared with 17 in 1915.

The decisions of the lower courts were affirmed in 68 per cent., modified in 13 per cent., and reversed in 14 per cent. of the appeals heard.

Receipts and charges.

88. Receipts fell from Rs. 7,13,066 to Rs. 7,05,190 and the expenditure from Rs. 3,16,761 to Rs. 2,91,842, the surplus of receipts over charges increasing from Rs. 3,96,305 to Rs. 4,13,348.

Hill districts and frontier tracts.

89. In the hill districts 1,950 suits of an aggregate value of Rs. 2,04,798 were instituted. The number of suits for disposal was 2,310, of which 200 were transferred, 1,980 decided and 130 left pending. Of 58 appeals before the courts, 55 were decided. In 35 cases the order of the lower court was confirmed, in 6 it was reversed and in 9 modified.

SECTION 7.—REGISTRATION.

[*See* Statistical Returns of the Registration Department in Assam for the year 1916, Report on the working of the Indian Companies Act, VII of 1913, in the province of Assam for the year 1916 17, and the Report on the working of the Muhammadan Marriages and Divorces Registration Act, 1876 (Bengal Act I of 1876), the Quzis Act, XII of 1880, and the Special Marriages Act, III of 1872, *in the* province of *Assam for the year 1916-17; Statistical* Abstract for British India, Volumes I and IV.]

General.

90. The number of offices at work at the close of the year was 39, as in the previous year. The permanent retention of the experimental whole-time offices at Gauhati in the Assam Valley and at Thakurbari and Sukhair in the Surma Valley was sanctioned.

Documents.

91. The number of documents registered increased slightly, being 90,271 in 1916 against 90,089 in 1915.

Receipts and expenditure.

92. Receipts fell from Rs. 1,11,035 in 1915 to Rs. 1,05,653 in 1916, while expenditure rose from Rs. 64,136 to Rs. 66,480. The decrease in receipts was mainly due to a decrease in registrations in the Sylhet district.

Muhammadan Marriages and Divorces Registration Act.

93. The number of offices at work at the end of the year was 35, as in the previous year. The number of ceremonies registered fell from 6,475 in 1915-16 to 4,999 in 1916-17. Sylhet and Cachar are mainly responsible for the decrease, which is attributed to the floods with which the districts were visited, and the consequent dullness of trade and high prices of all kinds of food-stuffs.

One meeting of the Permanent Committee for the supervision of Muhammadan Marriage Registrars and Qazis was held during the year. The aggregate income of these Registrars decreased from Rs. 9,812 to Rs. 7,623.

Indian Companies Act.

94. Three companies limited by shares were registered during the year as against two in the preceding year. Two companies went into voluntary liquidation and the liquidation of another was ordered by the court under section 162 of Act VII of 1913. Five companies were struck off the register under the provisions of section 247 of the Act. At the close of the year there were 55 companies limited by shares at work with an aggregate paid-up capital of Rs. 24,71,726 as compared with 60 companies and a paid-up capital of Rs. 21,25,689 at the close of the previous year.

Provident Insurance Societies Act.

95. There were three provident insurance societies at work during the year under report.

SECTION 8.—MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION.

[*See* Resolution reviewing the Reports on the working of Municipalities in Assam during the year 1916-17; Statistics of British India, Part VIII.]

Constitution.

96. During the course of the year the Sibsagar Station was converted into a municipality under Act III (B. C.) of 1884, and since the close of the year this

Act has been introduced into the Barpeta Municipality in place of Act V (B.C.) of 1876. Unions have been constituted at Doom Dooma in the Sadr subdivision of the Lakhimpur district and at Palasbari in the Sadr subdivision of the Kamrup district under Act V (B.C.) of 1876. The provisions of Part IX of Act III (B.C.) of 1884 were extended to the Sylhet Municipality, and those of Parts VII and X of the same Act to the Tezpur and Goalpara Municipalities, respectively. The provisions of all the parts of Act III (B.C.) of 1884, except Parts VII and VIII, were extended to the Nowgong Municipality. The provisions of Part IX of the Act, excluding section 332, were extended to the Sibsagar Municipality. The provisions of several sections of Part VI were extended to the Silchar, Habiganj, Sunamganj and Shillong Municipalities and to certain areas of the Sylhet Municipality. The provisions of sections 254 to 260A of the Act were extended to the town of Sunamganj, and those of sections 224 to 232, 236 to 244, 266, 267, and 270 to 273 of the Act to the Jorhat Municipality. The provisions of section 241 of Act III (B.C.) of 1884 were extended to the Dhubri, Gauhati and Tezpur Municipalities. Certain bye-laws framed by the Commissioners of the Gauhati Municipality for the regulation of cattle traffic, bakeries, hotels, etc., by the Commissioners of the Dibrugarh Municipality for the conduct of road traffic, and by the Commissioners of the Nowgong Municipality under section 350 of Act III (B.C.) of 1884 were confirmed. A set of rules framed by the Commissioners of the Dibrugarh Municipality under the Hackney Carriage Act was confirmed by the Commissioner of the Division. Act V (B.C.) of 1880 (the Bengal Vaccination Act) was extended to the Nazira and Mangaldai Unions. The provisions of Act IV (B.C.) of 1873 (Registration of Births and Deaths) were extended to the Mangaldai Union. The boundaries of the Dhubri and Gauhati Municipalities were revised. The elective system was introduced in the Habiganj, Karimganj, Sunamganj, and Sibsagar Municipalities. The number of meetings held by municipal bodies rose from 244 to 293, and the average percentage of attendance was 59·29 as against 66·12 in the preceding year.

Taxation.

97. General or partial revisions of assessment were carried out in five municipalities, and resulted in substantial increase of income at Sylhet, Habiganj and Shillong. The number of rate-payers in the municipalities of the province rose from 22,771 to 23,799, and the percentage of rate-payers to the total urban population from 17·80 to 18·14. The average incidence of taxation for the province per head of population rose from Rs. 2-0-9 to Rs. 2-5-1.

Income.

98. The total income of municipal institutions, excluding opening balances, amounted to Rs. 5,40,161, or Rs. 69,593 more than the figures of the previous year. Receipts under the head "Grants and contributions" rose from Rs. 1,11,907 to Rs. 1,31,734, of which Rs. 1,26,096 were contributed by Government against Rs. 1,06,072 in the preceding year.

Expenditure.

99. The total expenditure amounted to Rs. 8,09,693 as compared with Rs. 5,92,215 in the previous year. Excluding repayments of loans, advances, deposits, etc., the ordinary expenditure amounted to Rs. 7,93,928 which represents an increase of Rs. 2,25,553 over the figures of the preceding year.

Water-supply.

100. The capital outlay and maintenance charges on account of water-supply were Rs. 2,80,727 and Rs. 39,358 against Rs. 69,540 and Rs. 34,618, respectively, in the preceding year. The water-works at Silchar and Tezpur were successfully completed shortly after the close of the year, and have been formally opened by the Chief Commissioner. Satisfactory progress was made with the Sylhet water-works, which would by now have been opened but for the non-arrival of certain stores ordered from England. The experiment with well sinking in connection with the Dhubri water-works proved a failure, it being found that the supply of water obtainable was altogether inadequate. It has been decided to abandon the well scheme, and the question of utilising the Brahmaputra river as the source of supply is being considered. The pipe water-supply scheme for the town of Sibsagar referred to in last year's report has been administratively approved, but execution has had to be postponed owing to lack of funds.

Public Works.

101. The expenditure on public works was Rs. 1,08,416 or Rs. 6,584 in excess of the figures of the preceding year. A total sum of Rs. 79,991 was spent on the construction and maintenance of roads against Rs. 77,382 in the previous year.

Conservancy and drainage.

102. The expenditure on conservancy fell from Rs. 1,75,219 to Rs. 1,71,449. This, however, does not denote any real falling off. The conservancy arrangements in almost all the municipalities were actually improved, but the Silchar Municipality had not, as in the preceding year, to repair damage caused by the floods, while the

Sylhet Municipality had only about a quarter of the special Government grant of Rs. 16,200 for conservancy improvements left to spend during the year. The Commissioners of the Goalpara Municipality prepared a five-year programme of conservancy improvement and have commenced to carry it out with their own resources. Minor improvements to the conservancy arrangements were effected in many towns. Arrangements were made for the construction as a sample in each municipal institution of a Jorhat pattern sanitary latrine. The services of the ten Sanitary Inspectors supplied to municipalities at Government expense proved of much value in securing more efficient administration of the conservancy system.

The capital outlay and maintenance charges on drainage were Rs. 3,022 and Rs. 10,302 against Rs. 4,297 and Rs. 10,630, respectively, in the preceding year. Minor improvements were effected in several municipalities, but no great advance is possible until the present financial stringency disappears, and the Administration is again in a position to render assistance. A portion of the insanitary municipal drains in the Kayapatti quarter of the Gauhati Municipality were made pucca at the expense of certain Marwari residents of the locality.

Financial position.

103. The aggregate closing balances of the municipal institutions amounted to Rs. 1,47,034 or Rs. 2,52,499 less than those of the preceding year, and the actual balance, excluding the value of uncashed cheques, fell from Rs. 3,96,903 to Rs. 1,43,724. At the close of the year four municipalities had outstanding loans to meet. All the municipalities except Gauhati and possibly Silchar ended the year in a sound financial position.

Audit.

104. The accounts of the Silchar, Habiganj, Shillong, Dhubri, Barpeta, Nowgong, Jorhat, Sibsagar, Dibrugarh and Tezpur Municipalities and of the Hailakandi, Maulvi Bazar, Golaghat and Nazira Unions were audited by the Examiner of Local Fund Accounts. The lamentable series of prosecutions of members of the staff of the Silchar, Sylhet and Sunamganj Municipalities for defalcation of municipal money have at last come to an end, and the Chief Commissioner has been assured that the closest attention is now being given to the accounts of these bodies and to proper supervision of the collecting and accounting staff. No further defalcations of municipal money were brought to light during the year.

General.

105. It is proposed to introduce the Assam Municipal Bill in the Legislative Council at the beginning of January 1918.

The question of the adequate supervision of municipal accounts was considered during the year, and general orders on the subject were issued.

SECTION 9.—Local Boards.

[*See* Resolution on the working of Local Boards in Assam during 1916-17; Statistics of British India, Part VIII.]

Composition of Local Boards.

106. The nineteen Local Boards were composed of 76 *ex-officio*, 45 nominated and 202 elected members. The Deputy Commissioner or the Subdivisional Officer was in all cases appointed Chairman. Since the close of the year the election of a non-official Chairman has, as an experimental measure, been sanctioned for the North Sylhet Local Board.

The average percentage of attendance of members at meetings rose from 63·47 to 65·66.

Finance.

107. The opening balances of the Boards aggregated Rs. 5,03,349. Their receipts amounted to Rs. 21,63,843, and their expenditure to Rs. 21,27,712, leaving an aggregate closing balance of Rs. 5,39,480. The slight decrease in the Boards' total income, excluding loans, deposits and advances, from Rs. 20,82,512 to Rs. 20,43,532 was due to an unavoidable reduction in Government contributions; these amounted to Rs. 9,27,106 against Rs. 9,71,030 in the previous year.

The work of the year: (*a*) Education.

108. The expenditure on education rose from Rs. 7,46,546 to Rs. 7,56, 644, and its percentage on the Boards' total income from 35·85 to 46·81. Steps were taken to check the tendency on the part of a few Boards to reduce, on receipt of their share of the recent Imperial educational grants, their own allotments for education. The number of lower primary schools rose from 3,162 to 3,168.

(*b*) Medical.

109. The number of dispensaries maintained or aided by Local Boards increased from 122 to 125, and the total expenditure on medical and sanitation, exclusive of water-supply, from Rs. 2,66,836 to Rs. 2,78,221, Female Sub-Assistant Surgeons, Lady Doctors and Midwives were employed, as usual, with assistance from the Countess of Dufferin's Fund and from Municipal and other funds.

110. The expenditure on water-supply rose from Rs. 1,78,192 to Rs. 2,00,994. The programmes financed from the special grants given in 1913-14 were all completed. Substantial progress was also made by many Boards in the work undertaken with the first and second years' grants given in connection with the five years' scheme of improvement of rural water-supply. (c) Water-supply

111. The total expenditure on Public Works fell owing to an unavoidable reduction in Government grants from Rs. 10,99,412 to Rs. 8,81,033. More money had to be spent on the repair of roads, which were extensively damaged by floods, than on original works. (d) Public Works.

112. The total veterinary charges increased from Rs. 24,343 to Rs. 28,835. Outbreaks of cattle-disease occurred in almost all the subdivisions of the Surma Valley, the most serious being in the sadar subdivision of the Cachar district and in the Habiganj subdivision of the Sylhet district. Additional Veterinary Assistants were posted to these two localities and to South Sylhet. (e) Veterinary.

113. Carpentry and weaving classes were, as usual, maintained by the Dhubri Local Board at one of its schools. The Gauhati Board employed one weaving demonstrator for the whole year and another for four months, the services of the latter having been lent to the Nowgong Board for the remaining eight months. (f) Industrial development.

114. Village Authorities have made good progress in the two experimental circles formed in the Gauhati subdivision. Thirty-two institutions were formally constituted under the Assam Local Self-Government Act. A total sum of Rs. 9,365 was spent by these institutions on various improvements in the villages concerned; but the actual amount of work done seems to indicate that a good deal was accomplished by means of voluntary labour. The results are encouraging and are an earnest of the work which may be expected of these bodies under wise and sympathetic guidance. (g) Village Authorities.

In the Jorhat subdivision thirty Village Authorities were formed during the year; they are reported to have been in working order since the close of the year.

Progress in the work of organising Village Authorities in the three experimental circles formed in the Sylhet district was much hampered owing to the Sub-Deputy Collectors appointed for the purpose having been employed on urgent relief work. They will attend to village organisation works as soon as possible.

115. As in the previous year, Boards had to exercise strict economy in all departments of their activity. Especially in the Surma Valley where there were severe floods, suspensions of revenue reduced the income of some of the Boards and three were obliged to take loans from Government. In spite of these unfavourable circumstances the work of the Boards generally showed some progress. General.

SECTION 10.—MILITARY (VOLUNTEERING).

MILITARY (VOLUNTEERS).

116. The undermentioned Volunteer Corps were in existence during 1916-17 and became units in the Indian Defence Force on the 1st April 1917 :— Military (Volunteering.)

1. Surma Valley Light Horse.
2. Assam Valley Light Horse.

The total number of members of these Corps was :—

	On 1st April 1916.	On 1st April 1917.
Officers	89 ...	86
Rank and file.	1,295 ...	1,227

The numbers on 1st April 1917 were made up as follows :—

Corps.	Officers (including staff and supernumerary officers).	Rank and file.	Reservists.	
			Officers.	Rank and file.
1	2	3	4	5
Surma Valley Light Horse ...	34	357	...	33
Assam Valley Light Horse ...	45	686	7	151
Total	79	1,043	7	184

The decrease in the strength as compared with that of last year is due mainly to members having proceeded on military duty.

The number of members of the Volunteer Corps who joined the Indian Army Reserve of Officers during 1916-17 is noted below :—

Corps.	Number joined.	Remarks.
1	2	3
Surma Valley Light Horse	11	
Assam Valley Light Horse	34	Seventeen members of this Corps also joined the Labour Corps.
Total	45	

CHAPTER IV.

PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

SECTION 1.—AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE.

[*See* Report of the Agriculture Department, Assam, for the year ending 30th June 1917.]

Staff.

117. There was an increase of six demonstrators and one Agricultural Inspector in the Subordinate staff but owing to the war no corresponding increase was possible in the case of the superior staff. Mr. Meggitt, the Agricultural Chemist, continued to act as Deputy Director of Agriculture, Assam Valley, in place of Mr. Birt who was still on military duty. Mr. McKay held the post of Deputy Director of Agriculture, Surma Valley.

Experiments.

118. The most important experiment in progress was the growing of sugarcane and manufacture of *gur* on a commercial scale at the Kamrup Farm. Six hundred and fifty acres were cleared and about 500 acres were under cane. An agreement was entered into with Mr. Maxwell under which he was to buy the cane and convert it into *gur*. It was found impossible to convert the enormous quantity of cane into *gur* economically, and it was decided to manufacture white sugar in future.

At the Karimganj Farm the pure line breeding of rice was continued. At the Shillong Farm experiments were made with different varieties of potatoes, and maize, job's tears and *raishan* were grown successfully as fodder crops.

The Fruit Garden in Shillong continued to make good progress during the year and some 5½ acres were added to the planted area, which now covers some 23 acres. Over 1,07,000 setts of sugarcane were sent out for distribution from the Jorhat Farm.

Demonstrations.

119. The utility of manures for rice and sugarcane, the introduction of improved varieties of sugarcane, potatoes and fodder crops, and the use of the 3-roller iron sugarcane mills and of the Meston plough, were the chief subjects of the demonstration work undertaken which showed that a considerable profit could be made from manuring with bonemeal and flour phosphate. In the Naga and Lushai Hills the extension of terrace cultivation was promoted. Useful demonstrations were carried out by certain honorary correspondents with sugarcane, jute, potatoes and paddy.

Live stock.

120. Mr. Blackwood's report on cattle in Assam was received during the year but no action was taken on it pending a further examination of the question. The breeding of cattle at Upper Shillong was continued, and the half English-Patna cattle and the progeny of their crosses with Khasi and Bhutia breeds proved well adapted to the climate of the Khasi Hills.

The poultry farm in the Lushai Hills was closed during the year as no marked improvement in the quality of the stock in the district was apparent in spite of its establishment.

Ten leaflets and one bulletin were issued during the year.

Miscellaneous.

121. The Weaving Master visited almost all weaving centres in the province, and through his exertions four new Co-operative Societies of weavers were founded in Sylhet and a purely weaver's supply Society at Gauhati.

SECTION 2.—CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES.

[*See* report on the working of Co-operative Societies in Assam for the year ending the 31st March 1917; Statistics of British India, Part II.]

Strength.

122. The number of Societies rose during the year from 315 to 344, the number of members from 18,232 to 19,700 and the working capital from Rs. 8,98,537 to Rs. 10,59,308. There was a decrease in the number of central banks from 10 to 9, but the number of unions increased from 2 to 3, of agricultural societies from 285 to 313 and of non-agricultural societies from 18 to 19. The number of members increased in all cases.

Central banks and unions.

123. The working capital of central banks increased from Rs. 3,29,275 to Rs. 3,76,866. The paid-up share capital of the banks increased from Rs. 49,755 to Rs. 55,048 or 15 per cent. of the working capital. The profits of the central banks amounted to Rs. 14,262. These banks issue loans to agricultural societies at rates of

interest varying from 7½ to 9⅜ per cent. per annum. The amount issued during the year was Rs. 67,300 against Rs. 58,965 in the previous year. One supervising union was registered at Hailakandi during the year, with 12 societies affiliated to it.

Agricultural societies.

124. The total working capital of agricultural societies rose from Rs. 3,95,185 to Rs. 4,65,945 and members' deposits from Rs. 83,794 to Rs. 99,264. The rate of interest on deposits remained the same as last year, *i.e.*, 6¼ per cent. Loans to the value of Rs. 1,42,098 were issued. The rate of interest varied from 12½ per cent. to 18¾ per cent. per annum. All the profits of the agricultural societies, amounting to Rs. 26,044, were carried to reserve funds.

Non-agricultural societies.

125. The total capital inclusive of reserve funds advanced during the year from Rs. 1,74,077 to Rs. 2,18,297. Deposits of members rose from Rs. 60,671 to Rs. 74,738 and those of non-members from Rs. 43,485 to Rs. 60,922. The rate of interest on current deposits varied from 4 to 4½ per cent. and on fixed deposits from 5 to 9 per cent. The societies issued Rs. 1,00,990 in 592 loans to their members, the rate of interest being the same as it was last year. The average amount of loan per member was Rs. 50-8-0. The societies worked at a profit.

Reserve funds.

126. The reserve funds of central banks increased from Rs. 14,019 to Rs. 16,606, while those of agricultural and non-agricultural societies increased from Rs. 63,255 to Rs. 85,306 and from Rs. 14,496 to Rs. 16,239, respectively.

Other forms of co-operation.

127. Some progress in the formation of societies for purposes other than the provision of credit was noticeable. A society for the supply of weaving materials was registered at North Gauhati and four new weavers' societies were formed in Sylhet. There is a great demand for this type of society and those which have been formed promise well. Assam offers a wide field in this direction for the application of the co-operative principle. The weaving master was appointed an organiser and supervisor of societies of this kind.

General.

128. The financial stringency resulting from the war rendered impossible the provision of funds for the sanctioned appointment of a Registrar of Co-operative Societies and Director of Industries, or for the increase of the supervising staff. Any considerable expansion of the co-operative movement was therefore not to be expected, and the abnormal conditions prevailing in the Surma Valley in consequence of the disastrous floods would in any case have been unfavourable to the multiplication of societies on sound lines.

SECTION 3.—Weather and Crops.

[*See* Report on the Season and Crops of Assam for the year ending 31st March 1917; Agricultural Statistics of British India, Volume I, Appendix A.]

Weather.

129. The spring rain was generally normal. The rainfall in the Brahmaputra Valley was average and in the northern hills above the average, while in the eastern hills and the Surma Valley it was in defect. From June to September there was much less rain than usual in the plains, while in the hills, especially in the northern part, the rainfall was considerably above the average. The autumn rainfall was in excess of the normal in all districts. Heavy precipitations occurring in October caused high floods in Cachar, parts of Sylhet and Nowgong and seriously damaged the crops. During December and January there was practically no rain, but in February the rainfall was heavier than usual and in consequence the winter rains were above the normal in most districts. Taking the year as a whole the rainfall was sufficient, but in parts was badly distributed.

Crops.

130. Rice is the most important crop grown in the province. It covered an area of 4,682,136 acres or 73 per cent. of the total cropped area, and showed an increase of 23,756 acres as compared with the preceding year. The increase was mainly due to the taking up of more land in Sylhet.

The cultivation of jute was extended and the area sown showed an increase, while the areas under oilseeds, sugarcane and cotton decreased.

The comparatively high prices of jute which prevailed at the close of the previous year were responsible for the increase in the area covered by this crop. Heavy rain at the time of sowing in several districts was the cause of the decrease in the area under oilseeds. The decrease in the area under sugarcane was due to the fact that in the Assam Valley less land was taken up for sugarcane cultivation by nomadic Nepalese, while in Sylhet most of the hills were closed to fresh settlement. The decrease in the area covered by cotton is attributed to a bad season and the restrictions on *jhuming*.

131. The outturn per acre of the spring rice was estimated at 85 per cent. of the normal against 75 per cent. in the preceding year. The yield of the autumn and winter rice crops was estimated at 75 and 79 per cent. respectively of the normal against 67 and 79 per cent. in 1915-16. The provincial outturn of rice on the basis of these estimates amounted to 1,496,815 tons, an increase of some 54,000 tons over the preceding year, but was still below the outturn of 1914-15. Outturn and prices.

The outturn of rape was estimated at 77 per cent. of the normal against 82 per cent. of the previous year. The low outturn was due to drought in December and January which retarded the growth of the crop. The outturn of sugarcane rose from 91 to 93 per cent. and that of jute from 63 per cent. to 83 per cent. The absence of heavy rain in July and the favourable weather in August greatly improved the prospects of jute. The price of *matikalai* and mustard was less than in the preceding year; the price of *gur* fluctuated and on the average was slightly lower than in 1915-16.

132. The mortality from outbreaks of cattle-disease was not above the normal. The high floods of October caused considerable damage to paddy in the Surma Valley and Nowgong, but the large deposits of silt which were left should benefit the crops in ensuing years. In most districts the material condition of the people was satisfactory but the damage which was done to the crops by floods in Cachar, Nowgong and parts of Sylhet entailed the distribution of agricultural loans and gratuitous relief on a large scale, and suspensions of revenue were also considered necessary. General.

SECTION 4.—FORESTS.

[*See* Progress Report of Forest Administration in the Province of Assam for 1916-17, and Statistics of British India Part IV(*b*)—Finance and Revenue.]

133. The total area of forests in the province at the close of the year was 22,072 square miles, of which 4,911 square miles were reserved forests. Only 32 square miles (12 square miles in the Western Circle and 20 square miles in the Eastern Circle) were finally gazetted as reserved forests, but a large number of the pending reservation cases were disposed of after the close of the year. Area and Settlement.

The principal additions to the reserves in the Western Circle were made in the districts of Sylhet and Kamrup, and in the Eastern Circle in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur, while 1,370 acres were disforested from the Inner Line reserve in the Cachar district.

134. No new working plans were prepared or undertaken during the year. The prescriptions of the existing working plans were, as far as possible, carried out, but the depressed state of the export timber trade, and the need for economy owing to the war necessitated the postponement of many projects. Fellings were considerably in arrears in the Western Range of Goalpara and no fellings were made in the Nambor working plan area owing to the lack of demand. Working plans.

In the Eastern Circle 39 square miles of boundary survey and 132 square miles of survey with interior details were made by the Survey Department.

135. The Goalpara tramway was worked at a profit of Rs. 4,147 as compared with Rs. 6,995 in the previous year. The decrease was due to the fact that owing to the slackness of trade the locomotive was in use for only 170 days during the year. The tramway line was extended by 1½ miles up to the Bhutan border in order to facilitate the export of *sal* logs from the Bhutan forests and make a profit on the freight paid by traders. This object, however, was not attained during the year as the traders were unable to pay up their Bhutan dues on the timber, and there was a shortage of timber to transport. Communications and buildings.

The expenditure on roads and buildings was curtailed as much as possible in view of the existing financial conditions. Twenty-eight miles of new roads and paths were constructed at a cost of Rs. 13,774, and a sum of Rs. 8,578 was spent on the construction of new rest houses and subordinates' quarters. Expenditure on repairs of roads and buildings amounted to Rs. 16,015 and Rs. 15,427, respectively.

136. The number of forest offences reported during the year increased from 902 to 1,021, of which 366 cases were taken into court against 320 in the previous year. There were 328 convictions and 52 acquittals. The increase in the number of forest offences is attributed to the stricter supervision of the work of forest subordinates. Adequate punishments were generally inflicted by the courts. Forest offences.

137. The experiment of burning the evergreen undergrowth in *sâl* forests was continued, but the results were not entirely favourable, though it is premature to form any definite conclusions before the burning has been continued for several years more. The *simul* plantations in the Eastern Circle were very successful. The rege- Sylviculture.

neration of *simul*, which is needed for the manufacture of tea boxes, is a subject of the greatest importance and it was decided to extend the system of sowing *simul* in *jhums*, which has already proved successful, wherever suitable areas and labour can be found.

After the close of the year, the measures necessary to increase the supply of tea box timber and to enable the mills to procure labour, elephants and machinery, were considered in consultation with forest officers and the managers of saw-mills and steps were taken to give effect to their conclusions.

The rubber plantations at Charduar and Kulsi were not regularly worked. Some rubber was extracted from the former by forest villagers, and sent to England for sale. The sale of the Charduar plantation is contemplated.

Financial results.

138. The improvement in the financial position of the Department, which was noticed last year, was maintained with even more satisfactory results in spite of the adverse conditions, the gross revenue being Rs. 11,56,828 and the surplus Rs. 4,76,525 against Rs. 9,92,888 and Rs. 2,66,434, respectively, in the preceding year. The improvement was common to both circles and was due to curtailment of expenditure as well as to the increase in receipts from both major and minor forest produce. Among the causes contributing to the increase were the demand for sleepers by the Assam-Bengal Railway, better sales in the Goalpara Division, the substitution of tree rates of royalty for the cubic foot rates in the Garo Hills, increased grazing and the better collection of grazing dues.

General.

139. No new forest villages were established, though the establishment of three villages was sanctioned during the year. A number of Santhals, Kols and Metches were as usual admitted in some of the existing villages.

The Goalpara-Bhutan elephant mahals, which were sold for Rs. 66,000 for the two seasons ending on 31st March 1917, yielded altogether a revenue of Rs. 1,28,300, of which half was payable to the Bhutan Darbar. Royalty was also paid on 80 elephants which were caught in the Naga Hills and Nowgong. During the year 424 elephants in all were captured.

Enquiries were made with regard to the lease of grass lands for the manufacture of paper pulp, but no area has as yet been leased for the purpose, and negotiations are still in progress.

The control of grazing in unclassed State forests in the Assam Valley was transferred to the Revenue Department after the close of the year, and special Superintendents of grazing were appointed. New rules were framed for the regulation of grazing by professional graziers, and the annual fee for buffaloes was fixed at Rs. 3, and for other horned cattle at six annas per head in the Assam Valley excluding the Garo Hills and the North-East Frontier where special rules are in force. Suitable areas were set apart for graziers who undertook to supply dairy product to towns and lower rates were charged in their case. Proposals for leasing the forests in the Katakhal drainage area to the Surma Valley Saw-mills were under consideration.

SECTION 5—MANUFACTURE AND MINES.

[*See* Statistical Abstract for British India, Volume I, Commercial.]

Tea.

140. The number of tea gardens increased from 781 to 786 and the acreage under tea from 382,824 (revised) to 389,172 acres. About 94 per cent. of the area under tea was plucked and yielded 242, 184, 571 lbs. of manufactured tea, green tea being manufactured only in Cachar. This represents a decrease of about 1·3 per cent. on the outturn of the previous year. The permanent and temporary labour forces increased by 24,016 and 2,407 persons, respectively.

Weather.

141. The weather was on the whole unfavourable to the growth of tea in the Surma Valley, while in the Assam Valley it was generally favourable. The rainfall was generally below the average and below that of the preceding year.

Prices.

142. The average Calcutta price for both valleys was 3 pies less than in the previous year. The opening of new gardens and the increase in area are indications of the prosperity of the tea industry. Owing to prohibitions and restrictions on account of the war exports fell in quantity and were smaller than in any year since 1914-15. The investment of Indian capital in tea is reported to be increasing in the Sylhet district.

Minerals.

143. A mining lease for the extraction of coal, iron, slate and shale was granted to the Assam Railways and Trading Company, Limited, over an area of 3·48 square miles in the district of Lakhimpur. In the Khasi and Jaintia Hills district a mining lease for the extraction of ore of tin, lead, titanium, etc., was issued in the name of the Khas

Hills Prospecting and Mining Syndicate over an area of 3 square miles in the Nongstoin State, and a sum of Rs. 1,380 was realised on account of the half-yearly dead rent and surface rent. A sum of Rs. 1,500 was realised on account of the rent of the Mawlong coal mining leases. In Cachar a license to prospect for mineral oil and in Sylhet two licenses for the same purpose were granted to Mr. F. H. Carslaw and the Burma Oil Company, Limited, respectively, on payment of fees amounting to Rs. 1,904. Oil suitable for use as fuel in its crude state was obtained in commercial quantities at the Burma Oil Company's wells at Badarpur.

The revenue derived from royalties on coal and oil increased from Rs. 62,714 to Rs. 1,16,657. The output of coal decreased from 308,671 tons to 286,965 tons, while that of oil increased from 4,550,150 gallons to 5,236,890 gallons. The receipts from coal mines increased by Rs. 914 and those from mineral oil by Rs. 53,029. The inclusion of Rs. 47,379, the duty on motor spirit levied under the rules issued under the Motor Spirit (Duties) Act (II of 1917) which came into force on the 16th February 1917, accounted for the large increase in the receipts from mineral oil.

In the Naga Hills, the Nazira Coal Company worked the Barjan coal mine and extracted 3,135 tons of coal, the value of the total output at the pit's mouth being Rs. 18,810

SECTION 6.—FACTORIES.

[*See* Statistical Abstract for British India, Volume I, Commercial.]

144. There were 14 factories at work in the province during the year. They were classified as follows :—

Factories.	Districts.	Number.
Printing presses ...	Khasi and Jaintia Hills ...	1
Railway workshops ...	Sibsagar, Nowgong and Lakhimpur ...	3
Colliery workshop ...	Lakhimpur	1
Petroleum refinery ...	Ditto	1
Pottery	Ditto	1
Saw-mills	Cachar (4), Sibsagar, Sylhet and Lakhimpur	7
	Total ...	14

The Tezpur Saw-mill (Darrang) was struck off the register as the number of operatives was reduced below 50.

The total average daily number of operatives employed in the province increased from 2,821 to 2,968. Of these, 2,245 were adult males, 489 adult females and 234 children against 2,085, 518 and 218, respectively, in the preceding year. Eight of the factories were inspected during the year. No adverse comments were made by the Inspector and no prosecutions were instituted. The number of accidents was three, all being classified as minor.

SECTION 7.—MARITIME TRADE.

Nil.

SECTION 8.—RAIL AND RIVER-BORNE TRADE.

145. Climatic conditions were on the whole not unfavourable to cultivation. The total rainfall of the province was sufficient except in the Surma Valley, where it was below normal and where high floods in October caused considerable damage to paddy. The provincial outturns of oilseed and tea was lower, while that of rice, jute and sugarcane was higher, than that of the previous year. General.

Imports increased in quantity from 10,301,848 maunds to 10,457,233½ maunds, but their value declined from Rs. 9,82,39,372 to Rs. 9,42,72,013. Exports fell in quantity from 10,694,093$\frac{3}{40}$ to 10,041,373½ maunds and in value from Rs. 16,01,78,473 to Rs. 11,98,20,645.

The total trade of Assam decreased in quantity from 20,995,941$\frac{3}{40}$ to 20,498,607 maunds, and in value from Rs. 25,84,17,845 to Rs. 21,40,92,658.

146. The principal imports were manufactured cotton, grain, pulse, iron and steel. The total value of imports in the case of foreign twist and yarn rose from 20·1 to Imports.

PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

27·2 lakhs of rupees, and that in the case of foreign piece-goods fell from 218·4 to 139·5 lakhs. There was no marked change in the trade in Indian piece goods.

There was an expansion of the import trade in rice, salt, machinery and mill work, but the imports of apparel, foreign piece-goods, grain, pulse, kerosine oil, mustard oil, betelnuts, sugar, unmanufactured tobacco and manufactured wood showed a falling off.

Exports.

147. The most important article of export is tea, its value representing 71·4 per cent. of the total value of exports by rail and river. The amount exported fell from 2,889,593 maunds in 1915-16 to 2,405,538 maunds in 1916-17. The export of paddy decreased by 67,051 maunds. The decrease is attributable to the poor harvest in the Surma Valley.

The export trade in jute, mustard seed, hides and raw silk expanded, while that in tea, rice in the husk and raw cotton declined.

SECTION 9.—Frontier Trade.

Registration.

148. During the year under report paid registrars were appointed at Daimara, and Udalguri in the Darrang district, and the registering stations at Orang and Behali were abolished. Registration in Darrang and the North Lakhimpur subdivision was transferred from the control of the Deputy Commissioners to that of the Political Officer, Western Section, North-East Frontier, with effect from the 1st September 1916.

Trade.

149. The total value of Frontier trade fell from Rs. 22,80,387 to Rs. 20,28,738, the total value of imports being Rs. 10,95,124 against Rs. 13,31,974 in the previous year, and that of exports Rs. 9,33,614 against Rs. 9,48,413. The general decrease in trade is attributable mainly to the contraction of trade with Bhutan owing to an outbreak of cholera at Darranga in Kamrup, the high prices of articles of export, and the export of lac direct to Calcutta by the Bhutan Agent.

Bhutan.

150. Imports and exports declined from Rs. 12,28,751 and Rs. 9,10,092 to Rs. 9,65,830 and Rs. 8,74,904, respectively.

Towang and Chardua r Bhutias.

151. The import trade rose from Rs. 11,857 to Rs. 27,736 and the export from Rs. 3,340 to Rs. 23,129. More accurate registration, due to the appointment of paid registrars at Udalguri and Daimara, is responsible for the expansion shown.

Akas and Daflas.

152. Imports and exports fell from Rs. 10,591 and Rs. 8,370 to Rs. 8,294 and Rs. 7,098, respectively. The decrease is attributed to the detention of some Daflas suspected of committing a raid on the Bogori coolie lines of Harmutty tea garden in the beginning of October 1916.

Abors, Mishmis, etc.

153. Imports and exports rose from Rs. 80,775 and Rs. 26,611 to Rs. 93,264 and Rs. 28,483, respectively. The rise in the price of Mishmi *teeta* is mainly responsible for the increase in value of the import trade.

General.

154. No taxes or imposts are levied on goods passing over the British Frontier, but a duty of 10 per cent. *ad valorem* in addition to royalty is realised on certain hill produce sold by auction in Sadiya Bazar.

SECTION 10.—Public Works.

Imperial works.

155. The expenditure under all heads amounted to Rs. 65,383. Quarters for the Squadron Surgeant Instructors at Moriani, Makum and Hollicherra were completed.

Provincial works.

156. The outlay on provincial works amounted to Rs. 33,60,499 or about seven lakhs of rupees short of the expenditure in the previous year. The decrease was shared by all heads of expenditure.

Residences.

Six new residences were completed and one purchased. Two residences were in progress.

Administrative.

157. Certain additions and alterations to the Treasury building at Gauhati were in progress.

Law and Justice.

158. The Subdivisional Officer's Court house at Sunamganj was re-roofed with corrugated iron.

Education.

159. The levelling of, and the provision of, railings round the compound of the Cotton College hostels at Gauhati were completed. A combined school and hostel at Aijal, the high schools at Goalpara, Maulvibazar and Jorhat, and certain improvements to the Kakojan Middle English School were also completed. Works in hand included the High School at Golaghat and the Murarichand College.

160. Two important works were in progress, *viz.*, the construction of the Central jail at Jorhat and the improvements to the Sylhet Jail. Jails.

161. Works completed were the police buildings at Lumding, Chunarughat, Bojali, Sibsagar, Sunamganj, the railway police buildings at Jorhat, Cinamara, Nahorbari, Rangajan and Kokilamukh and the outpost at Tuipang. The police buildings at Sulla were in hand. Police.

162. A cholera hospital at Dhubri and infectious diseases ward at Shillong were completed. The conversion of the Lunatic Asylum at Tezpur into a Central Asylum and the construction of certain additional buildings for the Berry-White Medical School at Dibrugarh were in progress. Medical.

163. The construction of pucca walls round the Jorhat distillery was abandoned and the improvement of the *gur* melting tank in this distillery was in hand. Excise.

164. The construction of a laboratory for the Agricultural Chemist at Jorhat was in progress. Agriculture.

165. An explosives magazine was completed at Chhatak and the collection of materials for various buildings in the North-East Frontier Division was in progress. Miscellaneous.

166. A sum of over two lakhs of rupees was spent on Original works and nearly 13 lakhs on Repairs. The most important road completed was the Lohit Valley road in the North-East Frontier. The Earle bridge at Karimganj was also completed. Communications.

167. A scheme for the protection from fire of Government buildings in Shillong was in hand. Miscellaneous Public Improvements.

168. The principal work was the construction of the Pasteur Institute in Shillong. Other works completed or in progress were the construction of, and improvements to, the dispensary buildings at Golaghat, Jorhat, Barpeta and Karimganj, and a High school and hostel at Sunamganj. Seven road projects were also undertaken on behalf of local bodies, the estimated cost of which aggregated $3\frac{1}{4}$ lakhs of rupees. Contribution works.

169. Snag-clearing operations were in progress in the Ranganadi river. A snag-boat and tender constructed by the R. I. M. Dockyard, Kidderpore, were delivered during the year. The former was commandeered for work in Mesopotamia, but foundered *en route*. Silt and other statistical observations of rivers were also undertaken. Minor Works and Navigation.

170. No addition was made to the open mileage, *viz.*, 914·07.

The restoration of the hill section of the Assam-Bengal Railway, which was wrecked by floods in 1915, was completed during the year. Work on the construction of the Chapparmukh-Silghat and Katakhal-Lalabazar railways was stopped for want of rails, owing to the war. Railways.

CHAPTER V.

REVENUE AND FINANCE.

A.—GROSS REVENUE.

171. The receipts and charges of the province are shown in the tables below :—

Receipts during 1916-17.

Heads of Accounts.	Imperial.	Provincial.	Total.
1	2	3	4
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
A.—Principal Heads of Revenue—			
I.—Land Revenue	37,70,919	38,08,794	75,79,713
II.—Opium	6,79,913	...	6,79,913
III.—Salt	770	...	770
IV.—Stamps	7,17,261	7,17,261	14,34,522
V.—Excise	...	55,41,053	55,41,053
VI.—Provincial Rates	...	10,578	10,578
VIII.—Income Tax	3,39,141	3,39,141	6,78,282
IX.—Forest	...	11,48,622	11,48,622
X.—Registration	...	1,02,962	1,02,962
XI.—Tributes from Native States ...	50,100	...	50,100
Total A.—Principal Heads of Revenue ...	55,58,104	1,16,68,411	1,72,26,515
B.—Interest—			
XII.—Interest	...	58,893	58,893
D.—Receipts by Civil Departments—			
XVIA.—Law and Justice—Courts of Law	...	1,42,796	1,42,796
XVIB.—Law and Justice—Jails ...	...	94,583	94,583
XVII.—Police	...	1,74,880	1,74,880
XVIII.—Ports and Pilotage	...	199	199
XIX.—Education	...	2,04,236	2,04,236
XXA.—Medical	...	6,499	6,499
XXB.—Sanitation	...	29,902	29,902
XXIA.—Agriculture	...	15,669	15,669
XXIB.—Scientific and Miscellaneous Departments.	...	17,966	17,966
Total D.—Receipts by Civil Departments ...	...	6,86,730	6,86,730
E.—Miscellaneous Civil Receipts—			
XXII.—Receipts in aid of Superannuation	34,988	5,877	40,865
XXIII.—Stationery and Printing ...	277	4,534	4,811
XXV.—Miscellaneous	2,635	54,311	56,946
Total E.—Miscellaneous Civil Receipts ...	37,900	64,722	1,02,622
H.—Railways—			
XXVI.—State Railways (Gross Receipts) ..	...	1,65,389	1,65,389
Deduct—Working Expenses	...	1,01,641	1,01,641
Net Railway Receipts	...	63,748	63,748
J.—Irrigation—			
XXX.—Minor Works and Navigation—Public Works.	...	72,004	72,004
K.—Other Public Works—			
XXXI.—Civil Works { Civil	...	74,370	74,370
XXXI.—Civil Works { Public Works ...	1,346	1,13,428	1,14,774
Total K.—Other Public Works	1,346	1,87,798	1,89,144
Military Receipts—			
XXXIV.—Military Works	4,258	...	4,258
Transfer between Imperial and Provincial ...	−17,54,964	+17,54,964	...
Grand Total	38,46,644	1,45,57,270	1,84,03,914

Expenditure during 1916-17.

Heads of Accounts.	Imperial.	Provincial.	Total.
1	2	3	4
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
A.—Direct demands on the revenue—			
1.—Refunds and drawbacks ...	16,085	25,868	41,953
2.—Assignments and Compensation ...	30,781	17,165	47,946
3.—Land Revenue	...	16,43,845	16,43,845
5.—Salt	849	...	849
6.—Stamps	24,340	24,340	48,680
7.—Excise	...	1,20,539	1,20,539
8.—Provincial rates	...	...	...
10.—Income-tax	2,344	2,345	4,689
11.—Forest	...	6,76,033	6,76,033
12.—Registration	...	67,905	67,905
Total A.—Direct demands, etc.	74,399	2,578,040	26,52,439
B.—Interest—			
13.—Interest on ordinary debt ...	...	1,16,901	1,16,901
14.—Interest on other obligation. { Civil ...	36,094	...	36,094
{ Public Works ..	...	...	...
Total B.—Interest	36,094	1,16,901	1,52,995
D.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments—			
18.—General Administration ...	1,60,734	5,94,073	7,54,807
19A.—Law and Justice—Courts of Law	...	10,27,425	10,27,425
19B.—Law and Justice—Jails ...	...	3,06,686	3,06,686
20.—Police	...	23,33,931	23,33,931
21.—Ports and Pilotage	...	65,756	65,756
22.—Education	...	14,39,231	14,39,231
23.—Ecclesiastical	18,843	...	18,843
24A.—Medical	...	5,26,400	5,26,400
24B.—Sanitation	...	1,42,872	1,42,872
25.—Political	...	5,67,560	5,67,560
26A.—Agriculture	...	2,82,892	2,82,892
26B.—Scientific and Miscellaneous Departments.	...	77,020	77,020
Total D.—Salaries and Expenses, etc.	1,79,577	73,63,846	75,43,423

Expenditure during 1916-17.

Heads of Accounts.	Imperial.	Provincial.	Total.
1	2	3	4
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
E.—Miscellaneous—			
27.—Territorial and Political Pensions ...	7,570	...	7,570
29.—Superannuation allowances and Pensions.	...	3,41,042	3,41,042
30.—Stationery and Printing ...	417	1,64,963	1,65,380
32.—Miscellaneous	20,145	5,16,300	5,36,445
Total E.—Miscellaneous ...	28,132	10,22,305	10,50,437
H.—Railway Revenue Accounts—			
40.—Subsidised Companies ...	...	5,112	5,112
41.—Miscellaneous Railway Expenditure	...	14	14
Total H.—Railways ...	...	5,126	5,126
J. Irrigation—			
43.—Minor Works and Navigations. Civil ...	...	...	...
43.—Minor Works and Navigations. Public Works ...	...	52,073	52,073
Total J.—Irrigation ...	...	52,073	52,073
K.—Other Public Works—			
44.—Construction of Railways ...	...	33,060	33,060
45.—Civil Works Civil ...	...	369,405	369,405
45.—Civil Works Public Works ...	21,190	28,94,080	29,15,270
Total K.—Other Public Works ...	21,190	32,96,545	33,17,735
L. Military Works Services—			
47.—Military Works Ordinary ...	36,998	...	36,998
47.—Military Works Special ...	7,195	...	7,195
Total L.—Military Works Services ...	44,193	...	44,193
Grand Total	3,83,585	1,44,34,836	1,48,18,421

Abstracts of receipts and expenditure during 1916-17.

Heads.	1915-16.			1916-17.			1916-17 compared with 1915-16.			
	Receipts.	Expenditure.	Net receipts + net expenditure —.	Receipts.	Expenditure.	Net receipts + net expenditure —.	Increase of revenue.	Decrease of revenue.	Increase of expenditure.	Decrease of expenditure.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
I. Principal Heads of Revenue	1,69,30,254	27,37,088	+1,41,93,166	1,72,26,515	26,52,439	+ 1,45,74,076	2,96,261	...	...	84,649
II. Departmental Heads—										
Interest	43,885	1,01,260	— 57,375	58,893	1,52,995	— 94,102	15,008	...	51,735	...
Civil Departments ...	5,69,907	75,57,826	— 69,87,919	6,86,730	75,43,423	— 68,56,693	1,16,823	...	...	14,403
Miscellaneous	92,957	10,65,903	— 9,72,946	1,02,622	10,50,437	— 9,47,815	9,665	...	...	15,466
Famine Relief and Insurance.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	...
Railway Revenue Accounts	1,53,781	1,19,370	+ 34,411	1,65,389	1,06,767	+ 58,622	11,608	...	...	12,603
Irrigation	...	95,846	— 95,846	72,004	52,073	+ 19,931	72,004	...	...	43,773
Other Public Works ...	1,71,057	40,35,408	— 38,64,351	1,89,144	33,17,735	— 31,28,591	18,087	...	...	7,17,673
Military Works Services ...	3,324	56,704	— 53,380	4,258	44,193	— 39,935	934	...	...	12,511
Total Departmental Heads	10,34,911	1,30,32,317	—1,19,97,406	12,79,040	1,22,67,623	— 1,09,88,583	2,44,129	...	51,735	8,16,429
Grand total	1,79,65,165	1,57,69,405	+ 21,95,760	1,85,05,555	1,49,20,062	+ 35,85,493	5,40,390	...	51,735	9,01,078

Land Revenue.

172. The expenditure of the year compares as follows with that of 1915-16, and with the budget estimate for 1916-17 :—

Minor heads.	1916-17 compared with 1915-16.		1916-17 compared with budget estimate.	
	Increase.	Decrease.	Excess.	Savings.
1	2	3	4	5
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Charges of District Administration ...	18,000	...	20,000	...
2. Management of Government Estates ...	...	...	...	...
3. Charges on account of Land Revenue collections	...	13,000	...	22,000
4. Charges on account of Fishery collection ...	...	...	...	...
5. Survey and Settlement	1,000	...	...	30,000
6. Land Records	...	...	...	3,000
7. Allowances to district and village officers ...	...	...	1,000	...

The increase under " Charges of District Administration " was due to larger outlay on law charges in connection with a Privy Council case to which the Maharaja of Hill Tipperah was a party, and the decrease under " Charges on account of Land Revenue collections " was the natural consequence of smaller collections of land revenue.

General Administration.

173. The details by minor heads of actual and estimated expenditure under this head are shown in round figures in the following table :—

Minor heads.	Actuals 1915-16.	Budget 1916-17.	Actuals 1916-17.	Comparison with actuals of 1915-16.	Comparison with budget of 1916-17.
1	2	3	4	5	6
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Salary of the Chief Commissioner ...	58,000	58,000	57,000	— 1,000	— 1,000
Sumptuary allowance of the Chief Commissioner	6,000	6,000	6,000	...	...
Staff and household of ditto ...	29,000	27,000	28,000	— 1,000	+ 1,000
Expenditure from contract allowance ...	7,000	7,000	7,000	...	...
Tour expenses	14,000	23,000	12,000	— 2,000	— 11,000
Legislative Council	10,000	12,000	17,000	+ 7,000	+ 5,000
Civil Secretariat	2,10,000	2,07,000	2,08,000	— 2,000	+ 1,000
Commissioners	1,66,000	1,65,000	1,40,000	— 26,000	— 25,000
Civil offices of Account and Audit—Imperial ...	1,61,000	1,59,000	1,61,000	...	+ 2,000
Ditto —Provincial ...	24,000	30,000	31,000	+ 7,000	+ 1,000
Inspector General of Registration, etc. ...	41,000	40,000	41,000	...	+ 1,000
Director of Land Records and Agriculture ...	47,000	49,000	47,000	...	— 2,000
Total	7,73,000	7,83,000	7,55,000	— 18,000	— 28,000

The smaller outlay on "tour expenses" as compared with the previous year was due to the Hon'ble the Chief Commissioner not being able to make his usual cold weather tour. The large saving as compared with the budget was due in part to the same cause, and partly to the maximum sanctioned grant for tour charges having been provided in the budget and not spent. Larger outlay in "travelling allowances" accounts for the excess both over the budget and last year's actual under "Legislative Council." The fluctuations under "Civil Secretariat" were mainly due to variations under salary charges. The large savings under "Commissioners" were mainly due to the fact that while the previous year's actuals and the budget included Rs. 24,000 for the cost of a steamer, no expenditure was recorded under the head in 1916-17, the steamer having been commandeered for service in Mesopotamia. The excess over the budget under "Civil Office of Accounts and Audit—Imperial," occurred on account of leave allowances of clerks, while that over the actuals of the previous year under "Provincial" was due to increase of establishment and larger outlay on travelling allowances ; the latter was also the cause of the excess over the budget. The saving as compared with the budget under the last two heads was due to smaller outlay on travelling allowances and contingencies.

B—IMPERIAL REVENUE AND FINANCE.

SECTION I.—Land Revenue.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1916-17.]

Land revenue.

174. The total ordinary land revenue demand rose from Rs. 77,82,273* to Rs. 81,82,484, of which Rs. 72,37,448 or 88·45 per cent. were collected and Rs. 28,584 remitted, leaving a net outstanding balance of Rs. 9,19,319 at the close of the year. The total demand on account of miscellaneous land revenue rose from Rs. 7,20,092 to Rs. 7,77,175, of which Rs. 7,25,146 or 93·31 per cent. were collected, Rs. 8,898 remitted and Rs. 43,131 remained outstanding.

SECTION 2.—Sources of Revenue other than Land Revenue.

Salt.

175. The only salt warehouse in the province is situated at Ajmiriganj in the district of Sylhet. The quantity of salt imported during the year amounted to 36,600 maunds against 30,000 maunds in the previous year and 31,014 maunds were cleared against

* Excludes quit rent of tributary mahals in Goalpara and Zemindars' share of revenue in the Garo Hills district.

34,863 maunds in the year 1915-16. The wholesale and retail prices ranged from Rs. 3-8-0 to Rs. 4 and from Rs. 4-6-0 to Rs. 5 per maund, the figures for the previous year being Rs. 2-15-7 and Rs. 3-4-0 per maund, respectively. The net revenue increased from Rs. 29,815 to Rs. 45,360, mainly on account of the enhancement of duty on salt.

Excise Receipts and charges.

173. The revenue demand under all heads amounted to Rs. 55,23,631 against Rs. 53,94,136 in the preceding year, showing an increase of 2·4 per cent. The Assam Valley including Manipur contributed the whole increase, the Surma Valley showing a decrease of Rs. 13,823. Both license fees and duty contributed towards the increase, the percentage of increase being 6·2 and ·3, respectively. Keen competition at the sales was responsible for the increase of revenue under license fees. The depressing effects of the war on the general course of trade, the distress caused by floods in certain localities, the various restrictive measures imposed in recent years with a view to check consumption, and the high retail prices resulting from enhanced vend fees, all combined to prevent the normal expansion of consumption, and consequently the usual increase in receipts from duty. Of the total demand recoverable during the year under report, 99·93 per cent. was realised, the outstanding balance being Rs. 584.

The expenditure of the Department, which represents 2·55 per cent. of the total receipts, rose from Rs. 1,29,500 to Rs. 1,41,459. The increase is mainly due to the inclusion under the Excise head for the first time of 1/3rd of the cost of the controlling office.

Country spirit.

177. The consumption of country spirit was practically stationary, owing partly to the various restrictive measures introduced in recent years and partly to the abnormal floods and the depression of trade due to the war. The receipts rose from Rs. 15,24,402 to Rs. 15,54,321 or by 1·9 per cent., the increase being due mainly to favourable settlements of shops.

There was no change in the area in which the outstill system was in force. Samples of the spirit manufactured at Jorhat have been declared by the Customs and Excise Chemist, Calcutta, as in previous years, to be of excellent quality and free from any deleterious substance.

Ganja.

178. The total number of retail licenses fell from 234 to 232. There was a decrease in the consumption of *ganja* from 708 maunds 34 seers to 674 maunds 39 seers, attributable to the distressed condition of the people owing to abnormal floods and scarcity. The total revenue remained practically the same as in the previous year, owing to better realisations under license fees.

Opium.

179. Although the consumption of opium fell by 4 maunds 23 seers, the total revenue rose from Rs. 30,53,933 to Rs. 31,38,948 or by Rs. 85,015. The increase occurred under license fees, a decrease of Rs. 1,863 under duty having been recorded. The increase in license fees was the result of keen competition at sales, whilst the fall in consumption may be attributed to higher retail prices.

General.

180. As a result of the increase of the cost price of opium from Rs. 8-8-0 per seer to Rs. 11 per seer, the issue price of the drug was raised by Rs. 3 per seer throughout the province. There was again a considerable reduction in the number of stills in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. Still fees were also largely increased, and restrictions imposed on the limit of possession and retail sale of liquor.

Stringent measures were adopted to check the spread of the opium habit in the Naga Hills. Local public opinion was freely consulted on the proposed sites of new shops and the alteration of sites of existing shops, and various shops were either closed, or moved to a new site, in deference to local wishes. Orders have issued since the close of the year constituting local boards and municipalities advisory committees in matters of general or local importance connected with excise administration.

The experimental arrangement with the Hill Tippera Durbar, restricting the number of excise shops within three miles of the border, has led to a diminution of the smuggling of hill liquor. The Government of India have also recently concluded an agreement with the Bhutan Durbar for the removal of all liquor shops within ten miles of the Bhutan border and this, it is hoped, will facilitate the suppression of traffic in Bhutan liquor in certain districts in the Assam Valley districts.

It has been decided to close the distillery at Jorhat with effect from the 31st March 1918, after which date supplies will be obtained from a firm in Calcutta.

Stamps.

181. Receipts under the Stamp and Court-fees Acts rose from Rs. 14,03,075 to Rs. 14,13,341, and the charges decreased from Rs. 40,709 to Rs. 39,117. The revenue derived from the sale of judicial stamps increased by Rs. 24,803 but there was a fall of Rs. 14,537 under non-judicial stamps. The normal growth of revenue was

maintained in the Assam Valley districts. The Surma Valley and Hill districts showed a decrease in revenue owing chiefly to the fact that the Valley was again visited with heavy floods during the year under report. The number of stamp vendors rose from 352 to 359, of whom 213 were in the Sylhet district, and the discount allowed to them fell from Rs. 29,009 to 28,301. Stamp prosecutions fell from 7 to 5, and the amount of fines imposed from Rs. 70 to Rs. 57. Applications made to the Collectors for probate and letters of administration were 61 in number against 44 in the previous year.

Income-tax.

182. Income-tax receipts rose from Rs. 4,62,793 in 1915-16 to Rs. 6,77,360, an increase of 46·36 per cent. The abnormal growth of revenue was mainly due to the enhanced rates of taxation imposed by Act V of 1916, a contributory cause being the prosperity of the tea industry.

The number of assessees and the final demand, excluding the tax on salaries of Government officials and on interest on securities, were 5,857 and Rs. 5,87,819 against 5,509 and Rs. 3,83,960, respectively, in the previous year.

183. SECTION 3.—PROVINCIAL FINANCE.

Year.	Opening balance.	Receipts.	Expenditure.	Closing balance.
1	2	3	4	5
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1915-16	29,48,878	1,42,88,971	1,52,40,070	19,97,779
1916-17	19,97,779	1,45,57,270	1,44,34,836	21,20,213

The budget estimate for 1916-17 provided for an opening balance of Rs. 18,87,000, receipts amounting to Rs. 1,46,12,000, expenditure amounting to Rs. 1,50,09,000 and a closing balance of Rs. 14,90,000.

Receipts.

Provincial receipts were worse than the budget by Rs. 55,000. The decline was mainly due to a fall in the collection of land revenue owing to distress caused by floods in certain parts of the province, and to a larger assignment to Imperial for the cost of forms for the use of this Province supplied by the Government of Bengal.

Expenditure.

The expenditure was lower than the budget estimate by Rs. 5,74,000. This was mainly due to smaller outlay on Public Works, Forest and the Police Departments owing to curtailment of expenditure on works as far as possible, and to savings under salaries of gazetted officers in the Police and Forest Departments. The budget provided for the full sanctioned scale of officers with some deductions for probable savings, but the actual savings turned out to be larger than those anticipated owing to the absence of a number of officers on deputation to the Military Department.

Assignments.

The opening balance of Rs. 19,97,779 included Rs. 10,34,000 in the shape of unspent balances of ear-marked grants given by the Government of India for Education, Sanitation, Police and for the development of the province, and also Rs. 5,50,000 representing the unspent balance of an assignment of Rs. 8,00,000 made for general purposes. Similarly, the closing balance included Rs. 9,19,000 on account of ear-marked grants referred to above, besides the unspent balance of the grant of Rs. 8,00,000 for discretionary purposes.

SECTION 4.—LOCAL FUNDS.

184. The following statements show the receipts and charges of the year of those Local Funds of which an account is submitted to Government.

A.

Statement showing the income, expenditure and balance of Local Boards and District Funds in Assam during the year 1916-17.

Serial No.	Names of Local Boards.	Opening balance.	Receipts.	Total.	Payments.	Closing balance.	Remarks.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	
1	Silchar ...	15,532 5 7	1,42,593 4 7	1,58,125 10 2	1,37,607 14 4	20,517 11 10	
2	Hailakandi ...	24,539 1 5	61,763 15 9	86,303 1 2	61,905 2 2	24,397 15 0	
3	Tezpur ...	30,130 11 6	1,06,437 8 11	1,36,568 4 5	1,06,383 0 1	30,185 4 4	
4	Mangaldai ...	30,953 6 2	97,799 9 9	1,28,752 15 11	78,703 14 3	50,049 1 8	
5	Dhubri ...	76,197 7 7	1,59,806 12 1	2,36,004 3 8	1,53,167 5 5	82,836 14 3	
6	Goalpara ...	23,497 14 10	69,751 12 10	93,249 11 8	74,870 10 7	18,379 1 1	
7	Gauhati ...	28,643 8 0	1,57,611 3 0	1,86,254 11 0	1,60,940 1 2	25,314 9 10	
8	Barpeta ...	4,551 2 8	59,494 3 4	64,045 6 0	46,407 7 4	17,637 14 8	
9	Dibrugarh ...	24,770 2 11	1,55,049 6 9	1,79,819 9 8	1,25,326 14 1	54,492 11 7	
10	North Lakhimpur	20,572 0 0	72,557 15 3	93,129 15 3	60,200 11 9	32,929 3 6	
11	Nowgong ...	17,148 5 1	1,02,515 9 10	1,19,663 14 11	1,04,732 7 7	14,931 7 4	
12	Sibsagar ...	57,928 2 3	1,12,239 1 8	1,70,167 3 11	1,39,828 15 4	30,338 4 7	
13	Jorhat ...	41,217 4 8	1,07,414 1 8	1,48,631 6 4	1,08,466 0 10	40,165 5 6	
14	Golaghat ...	24,737 14 8	75,704 10 2	1,00,442 8 10	74,219 8 5	26,223 0 5	
15	North Sylhet ...	5,707 8 10	1,69,473 9 0	1,75,181 1 10	1,50,638 13 0	24,542 4 10	
16	Karimganj ...	22,843 4 0	1,39,461 6 1	1,62,304 14 1	145,067 7 3	17,237 6 10	
17	Sunamganj ...	13,463 5 9	1,06,424 5 2	1,19,887 10 11	1,14,936 14 2	4,950 12 9	
18	South Sylhet ...	11,155 8 5	1,17,588 4 10	1,28,743 13 3	1,22,330 3 1	6,413 10 2*	
19	Habiganj ...	29,785 8 7	1,33,793 2 0	1,63,578 10 7	1,45 640 9 11	17,938 0 8	
	Total ...	5,03,374 14 11	21,47,479 14 8	26,50,854 13 7	21,11,374 0 9	5,49,480 12 10	
20	Garo Hills District Fund.	Nil	4,286 1 0	4,286 1 0	387 4 4	3,898 12 8	Opened with effect from December 1916.

* Balance accepted Rs. 6,413-9-10, difference of 4 pies adjusted in 1917-18.

B.

Statement showing the income, expenditure and balance of Municipalities and Unions in Assam during the year 1916-17.

Serial number.	Names of Municipalities.	Opening balance.	Receipts.	Total.	Payments.	Closing balance.	Remarks.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	
1	Silchar ...	81,352 9 10	34,613 2 0	1,15,965 11 10	99,985 2 8	15,980 9 2	
2	Hailakandi ...	3,744 7 8	4,778 14 6	8,523 6 2	5,552 12 4	2,970 9 10	
3	Tezpur ...	1,19,202 4 7	29,653 15 6	1,48,856 4 1	1,10,264 12 8	38,591 7 5	
4	Mangaldai ...	1,936 3 10	4,839 14 2	6,776 2 0	4,398 8 1	2,377 9 11	
5	Dhubri ...	9,261 1 1	25,703 1 0	34,964 2 1	24,029 8 4	10,934 9 9	
6	Goalpara ...	2,012 8 7	13,723 5 1	15,735 13 8	13,862 1 10	1,873 11 10	
7	Gauhati ...	4,452 15 9	95,596 13 6	1,00,049 13 3	99,447 2 4	602 10 11	
8	Barpeta ...	3,207 12 7	17,097 4 11	20,305 1 6	14,893 6 4	5,411 11 2	
9	Shillong ...	6,017 15 4	90,787 15 4	96,805 14 8	90,639 7 6	6,166 7 2	
10	Dibrugarh ...	4,759 2 6	55,873 0 2	60,632 2 8	57,285 8 8	3,346 10 0	
11	North Lakhimpur...	5,753 0 4	5,631 5 0	11,384 5 4	6,149 1 3	5,235 4 1	
12	Nowgong ...	6,708 12 4	19,266 8 1	25,975 4 5	20,885 15 11	5,089 4 6	
13	Jorhat ...	4,153 7 5	27,327 0 0	31,480 7 5	29,319 8 11	2,160 14 6	
14	Sibsagar ...	5,871 13 6	18,152 11 4	24,024 8 10	17,581 1 9	6,443 7 1	
15	Golaghat ...	4,466 7 4	9,144 7 3	13,610 14 7	8,463 9 4	5,147 5 3	
16	Nazira ...	7,775 4 4	4,302 0 6	12,077 4 10	6,324 10 10	5,752 10 0	
17	North Sylhet ...	1,16,760 12 9	39,424 8 0	1,56,185 4 9	1,43,052 12 5	13,132 8 4	
18	Habiganj ...	7,303 3 6	15,577 14 3	22,881 1 9	17,888 1 6	4,993 0 3	
19	Karimganj ...	5,671 4 7	13,611 6 10	19,282 11 5	16,228 9 11	3,054 1 6	
20	Sunamganj ...	6,041 14 1	13,358 1 4	19,399 5 5	12,883 2 0	6,516 3 5	
21	South Sylhet ...	2,155 11 5	6,633 11 3	8,789 6 8	7,096 5 6	1,693 1 2	
	Total	4,03,608 3 4	5,45,097 0 0	9,53,705 3 4	8,06,231 6 1	1,47,473 13 3	

C.

Statement showing the income, expenditure and balance of Towns and Bazar Funds in Assam during the year 1916-17.

Serial number.	Names of Funds.	Opening balance.	Receipts.	Total.	Payments.	Closing balance.	Remarks.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	
1	North Cacar Hills Bazar Fund.	3,879 13 3	8,503 5 3	12,383 2 6	9,538 7 5	2,844 11 1	
2	Jowai Bazar Fund.	179 3 6	344 5 0	523 8 6	91 4 6	432 4 0	
3	Imphal Town Fund.	1,204 13 9	16,983 15 4	18,188 13 1	16,456 8 1	1,732 5 0	
4	Sadiya Bazar Fund.	Nil.	23,922 15 0	23,922 15 0	6,761 11 3	17,161 3 9	(Account opened with the treasury from September 1916).
	Total ...	5,263 14 6	49,754 8 7	55,018 7 1	32,847 15 3	22,17 7 10	

D.

Statement showing the income, expenditure and balance of Cantonment Funds, Chowkidari Reward Funds and Williamson Education Fund during the year 1916-17.

Serial number.	Names of Funds.	Opening balance.	Receipts.	Total.	Payments.	Closing balance.	Remarks.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			(a) CANTONMENT FUNDS.				
		Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	
1	Khasi and Jaintia Hills.	1,888 5 8	13,482 9 0	15,370 14 8	11,896 7 8	3,474 7 0	
2	Lakhimpur ...	868 3 7	2,451 13 6	3,320 1 1	2,188 4 0	1,131 13 1	
	Total ...	2,756 9 3	15,934 6 6	18,690 15 9	14,084 11 8	4,606 4 1	
			(b) DISTRICT CHOWKIDARI REWARD FUNDS.				
1	Cachar ...	702 0 9	1,154 5 0	1,856 5 9	1,005 0 0	851 5 9	
2	Goalpara ...	11,266 2 4	753 2 0	12,019 4 4	410 0 0	11,609 4 4	
3	Sylhet ...	10,590 8 0	4,226 8 3	14,817 0 3	3,526 4 0	11,290 12 3	Accepted for Rs. 11,290-4-3, difference of annas 8 reconciled in 1917-18.
	Total ...	22,558 11 1	6,133 15 3	28,692 10 4	4,941 4 0	23,751 6 4	
			(c) ASSAM WILLIAMSON EDUCATION FUND.				
		809 4 2	4,514 2 10	5,323 7 0	3,187 1 11	2,136 5 1	

SECTION 5.—LOCAL RATES.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1916-17.]

185. The current demand rose from Rs. 8,05,345 to Rs. 8,25,685, an increase of Rs. 20,340 for which the corresponding increase in the land revenue demand was in part responsible. There was a slight falling off in the current collections, 82·77 per cent. of the demand being realised as against 83·92 per cent. in the preceding year. 95·33 per cent. of the arrears were collected as against 98·38 per cent. in 1915-16. Of the total outstanding balance of Rs. 1,32,347, the district of Sylhet was responsible for Rs 1,03,024. Suspensions of payment were necessary on account of the disastrous floods of October 1916. Remissions amounted to Rs. 359. Local rates.

SECTION 6.—EDUCATIONAL CESSES.

Nil.

SECTION 7.—MUNICIPAL REVENUE.

186. The subject of Municipal income and expenditure is discussed in Section 8, Chapter III, of this Report.

CHAPTER VI.

SECTION I.—VITAL STATISTICS.

General. 187. The provincial vital statistics are based on a population of 6,051,507 in the plains districts. The birth-rate during the year was 30·52 per mille, as compared with 33·60 in 1915 and a quinquennial average of 32·75. Public health was not seriously affected during the year by the adverse meteorological conditions which prevailed, although heavy floods caused a rise in the price of food-stuffs and necessitated the grant of gratuitous relief and of agricultural loans in certain areas. The death-rate per mille for the year was 28·59 as compared with 30·86 in the preceding year and a quinquennial average of 26·37. The excess of the birth-rate over the death-rate fell from 2·74 to 1·93 per mille.

In tea estates the birth-rate fell from 26·27 in 1915 to 25·15, while the death-rate rose from 26·47 to 30·96 per mille. The number of deaths exceeded the number of births in all districts except Cachar and Sylhet.

The ratio of mortality from the chief diseases was 16·02 from fever, 2·16 from cholera and 2·58 from dysentery and diarrhœa against 14·11, 3·00 and 2·49, respectively, in the preceding decennium.

Registration. 188. The appointment of sanitary inspectors of the sub-assistant surgeon class as registrars of births and deaths has resulted in more complete registration in urban areas. In the rural areas of Sylhet, Cachar and Goalpara, vital statistics were collected by police chaukidars, and in Kamrup, Darrang, Nowgong, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur by gaonburas. As was observed last year, the position in rural areas must remain unsatisfactory till village authorities are formed and utilised. The question of the improvement of tea-garden registration was considered, and it has been directed that in future the monthly returns shall be submitted by tea estates to the District Magistrate, and transmitted by him, through the office of the Civil Surgeon, to the Sanitary Commissioner. It is hoped that this system will ensure greater regularity in reporting, and an improvement in the accuracy of the returns.

Hill districts. 189. Vital statistics recorded in hill districts are given in the following table :—

Districts.	Birth-rate.		Death-rate.	
	1915.	1916.	1915.	1916.
1	2	3	4	5
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	24·76	24·12	13·38	23·40
Naga Hills	26·36	18·73	15·68	33·11
Lushai Hills	46·27	41·68	29·45	29·86
Garo Hills	26·07	22·72	27·94	19·86

The prevalence of fever during the monsoon period is believed to be the cause of the adverse change in the figures relating to the Naga Hills.

SECTION 2.—IMMIGRATION AND LABOUR INSPECTION.

[*See* Resolution on Immigrant Labour in Assam for the year 1916-17.]

Immigration. 190. There was a considerable decrease in the number of immigrants during the year under report. The decrease is ascribed to good crops in the recruiting districts, to the increased demand for labour in those districts by industries connected with the war ; to the heavy importations of the preceding year, which rendered it unnecessary to recruit a large supply of labour ; and in part to curtailment of expenditure owing to the difficulty of disposing of the crop. The mortality on transit was considerably lower than that of last year and the general health of the garden population was good. The bulk of the immigrants came from the Sonthal Parganas and Chota Nagpur and the plains of the United Provinces, Bengal and Bihar.

191. The total strength of the labour force at the close of the year was 956,716 against 953,127 in the preceding year. The number of labourers under Act VI contracts which have not yet expired was 2,731 only or 0·4 per cent. of the total adult labourers. The recorded birth-rate per mille on the total coolie population and that on the adult female population were 22·8 and 79·6 against 23·7 and 82·0, respectively, in the previous year. The death-rate per mille of the total labour force was lower than that of the previous year, being 26·0 against 27·4. Immigrant population.

The number of cases of fraudulent and irregular recruitment fell from 76 to 21, of which 11 were found on investigation to be true. Two complaints of ill-treatment, one of which was found to be a trivial one, were instituted by coolies against their employers. There were 7 cases of unlawful assembly or riot and two cases of assault during the year under report. In these cases 56 persons were sentenced to imprisonment.

Act XIII of 1859 continued to be largely used, and is again reported to have worked satisfactorily. The cash advances on which agreements under this Act are based are welcomed by the labourers, whilst the obligation to work out the term of agreement is well understood, and in the great majority of cases loyally carried out. It is the moral effect of the Act which constitutes its chief value to the tea industry, and prosecution for breach of agreements is resorted to but little.

The relations between planters and the neighbouring villagers were, as usual, satisfactory. At the close of the year time-expired coolies held 235,094 acres of Government land in their names as tenants and 32,346 acres of land as sub-tenants, against 221,161 and 30,798 acres, respectively, in the preceding year. The area of Government land settled with managers on special and ordinary leases to enable them to provide their coolies with cultivation was 17,693 acres.

SECTION 3.—CHARITABLE DISPENSARIES.

[*See* Triennial Report on the working of the Dispensaries in Assam for the years 1914, 1915 and 1916.]

192. The number of hospitals and dispensaries in the province rose from 205 in 1915 to 215 in 1916. Of these, 124 were supported by local bodies, 18 by private persons and 73 by the State. Thirteen new institutions were opened and 3 were closed during the year. Owing to the transfer of medical officers to the Military Department and the difficulty of securing qualified substitutes to replace them, the total number of hospitals and dispensaries at work is still less by ten than it was at the commencement of 1914. Dispensaries.

The number of patients treated rose from 1,619,294 in 1915 to 1,627,949 in 1916. The total number of inspections made during the year was 568 against 458 in 1915.

The income at the disposal of State-public, Local Fund and private-aided dispensaries was Rs. 5,75,678, of which Rs. 2,41,230 or 41·90 per cent. was contributed by Government. The total expenditure during the year was Rs. 4,47,529 against Rs. 4,13,823 in the preceding year. The increase in expenditure was mainly due to the reopening of certain dispensaries, to larger expenditure on buildings, equipment, and European medicines, and to the inclusion in the figures of expenditure incurred in the North-East Frontier Tract.

The completion of the King Edward VII Memorial Pasteur Institute and School of Research at Shillong was perhaps the most important feature of the provincial medical history of the three years. The greater part of the cost of construction and equipment was met from the share allotted to Assam of the funds collected by public subscription towards the Eastern Bengal and Assam King Edward VII Memorial Fund. The Institute was opened in January 1917, and has made a most promising start. Important work has also been taken up at the Institute in connection with *kala-azar*.

193. The number of patients treated in the Leper Asylum at Sylhet was 94 against 79 in 1915. Of these, 39 were discharged otherwise than as cured, or released, 11 died, and 44 remained at the close of the year. The total expenditure, excluding establishment charges, was Rs. 3,957 against Rs. 3,755 in the previous year. Leper Asylum.

In the Kohima Leper hospital 27 patients were treated against 26 in the previous year. Of these, 1 was discharged cured or relieved, 6 discharged otherwise, 2 died and 18 remained at the close of the year. Exclusive of establishment charges the total expenditure was Rs. 1,410, against Rs. 1,431 in 1915.

The new methods of treatment adopted by Dr. Heiser and Lieutenant-Colonel Rogers were tried side by side in the Sylhet Leper Asylum. The former method was tried at Kohima also. No definite opinion on the efficacy of either treatment is yet to hand.

SECTION 4.—LUNATIC ASYLUM.

[*See* Statistical Returns of the Lunatic Asylum in Assam for the year 1916.]

Population. 194. One hundred and twenty-one patients were admitted during the year against 127 in the previous year. The district of Sylhet furnished the largest number (21). Fifty-eight were discharged cured, 14 made over to their friends as "mentally improved," 5 discharged otherwise, 2 escaped, and 52 died (including 1 observation case who committed suicide and 1 homicide), leaving 343 inmates in the asylum at the close of the year, of whom 110 were criminal lunatics. The largest number of insanes was, as asual, among cultivators and tea-garden coolies between 20 and 40 years of age.

Predisposing causes were known in the case of 38 admissions and exciting causes in that of 47. In 10 cases both the predisposing and exciting causes were known. No cause was assigned in 35 cases.

Health. 195. The number of admissions to hospital rose from 123 to 222 and the number of deaths from 29 to 52. The death-rate per cent. on the average population was high, having risen from 8·92 to 14·44. The increase in mortality is attributed mainly to overcrowding. Steps have been taken to remedy this defect.

Cost of maintenance. 196. The cost of maintaining the asylum rose from Rs. 56,802-13-2 to Rs. 71,028-0-3, and the average cost per head from Rs. 174-13-0 to Rs. 197-3-9. The profits in the manufactory department were Rs. 8,403-2-4 against Rs. 7,240-9-9 in the previous year, or an average of Rs. 61-15-0 per head of inmates employed on manufactures.

SECTION 5.—SANITATION.

[*See* Annual Sanitary Report of the Province of Assam for 1916.]

Urban areas. 197. Although funds were not available as freely as they have been in the past, considerable improvement in urban sanitation was effected during the year, and increased activity and efficiency in sanitary administration has been displayed in most of the municipalities.

Rural areas. 198. The progress made with schemes for the improvement of rural water-supply was satisfactory. The scheme for the improvement of the water-supply in Kallang river area in Nowgong district is still in progress, and 24 wells have been completed. Government grants amounting to Rs. 1,21,000 were placed at the disposal of Local Boards to finance the second year's work on the five-year programmes for the improvement of the drinking water-supply in rural areas. The work included in the first year's programme has for the most part been completed.

Medical. 199. The sale of quinine "treatments" showed an increase of 5,335 parcels over the figures of the previous year.

In the absence of an officer who can devote his time to the elucidation of the causes which lead to the prevalence of malaria in the province, and in view of the financial stringency entailed by the war, the consideration of special anti-malarial measures has had to be postponed for the present. The operations undertaken with the object of watching and dealing with cases of *kala-azar* were continued, and four travelling dispensaries were at work. The total mortality from the disease varied little from that of the preceding two years. A serious outbreak of *kala-azar* came to light in a tea garden in the Golaghat subdivision of the Sibsagar district. The detailed measures to be adopted to deal adequately with the situation are under consideration, and the garden authorities are taking action to give effect to the preventive measures which experience has shown to be required.

SECTION 6.—VACCINATION.

[*See* Triennial Report on Vaccination in Assam for the three years ending 1916-17.]

Operations. 200. The total number of operations performed during the year by all agencies was 371,662, which represents an increase of 59,264 operations as compared with the figures of the previous year. The average number of persons vaccinated by each vaccinator was 1,080 as against 961 of the preceding year. The total number of successful vaccinations increased from 267,545 to 305,622. The increase was considerable in the districts of Cachar, Sylhet, the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and Sibsagar. In Kamrup the prejudices of the Mahapurushia sect against vaccination were overcome to some extent with the result of a largely reduced death-rate in the district from small-pox in 1916-17.

The percentages of success in primary vaccinations and re-vaccinations were 97·73 and 69·40, respectively, against 96·63 and 62·29, respectively, in the previous year. Of the total number of primary operations and re-vaccinations performed, 8·27 per cent. and 8·22 per cent., respectively, were inspected by Civil Surgeons, as compared with 7·32 per cent. and 7·93 per cent. in the previous year. The percentage of inspections in the case of the subordinate inspecting staff was 53·10 per cent. and 32·81 per cent., respectively, against 53·16 and 51·65 in the preceding year.

An improvement is apparent in the vaccination work in compulsory areas, except Sylhet, where the degree of protection afforded to infants under one year of age is only 18 per cent. Steps are being taken to ensure that before the termination of the vaccination season all children born during the previous twelve months are successfully vaccinated.

The cost of the Department, including that of the lymph prepared at the Shillong Vaccine Depôt, was Rs. 52,636-11-9, which gives an average cost of Re. 0-2-9 for each successful vaccination, against Rs. 51,441-10-9 and Re. 0-3-1, respectively, in the preceding year. The utilisation of the cold storage room at the Shillong Pasteur Institute has enabled arrangements to be made whereby an ample supply of lymph is always on hand to meet a sudden demand and the possibility of the issue of an infective batch of lymph is minimised.

CHAPTER VII.

INSTRUCTION.

SECTION 1.—General System of Public Instruction.

[*See* General Administration Report for 1911-12, Part I, pages 121-123.]

SECTION 2.—EDUCATION.

General.

201. Institutions, public and private as well as their enrolment shew a slight falling off. Public institutions return an advance in number from 4,560 in 1915-16 to 4,587 in 1916-17, but their enrolment declined from 2,26,845 to 2,24,819. The Surma Valley where flood and scarcity prevailed is responsible for this decline. Private institutions which are fluctuating concerns fell off from 340 to 303 in number and from 10,640 to 9,094 in enrolment.

The total expenditure on public institutions decreased from Rs. 26,87,559 to Rs. 25,59,290 the decline being under the head "Public funds."

Collegiate education.

202. On 31st March 1917 there were 688 students in the two Arts Colleges shewing an increase of 95 over the enrolment for the preceding year. Both colleges continued to maintain a satisfactory record of success in the public examinations and to develop other sides of college life. The number of intermediate passed students rose from 115 to 140 and the number of graduates from 34 to 48. The proposal to raise the Murarichand College to the degree standard materialised and this year for the first time in the history of the Surma Valley candidates appeared at the B. A. examination from a local college. No fewer than 11 graduated out of a class of 15.

Two candidates were sent up from the Cotton College for the M. A. Degree. Both were successful.

The Murarichand College continued to be housed in temporary buildings, the permanent building programme being held over till the recurrence of better times.

Secondary education.

203. Secondary schools for males, English and vernacular, increased from 240 to 261 during the year. The number of high schools advanced from 31 to 35 but there was a decrease in the number of recognized middle English schools from 117 to 113 and an increase from 91 to 112 in the number of middle vernacular schools. The diminution in the number of middle English schools is accounted for by the transference to the high school list of 4 schools which were returned in previous years as middle English. The enrolment of the high and middle vernacular schools shews an advance from 12,085 to 13,382 and from 10,347 to 12,328, respectively, while that of the middle English schools shews a decline from 12,353 to 11,183 due to the falling off in the number of schools.

Primary education.

204. The total number of primary schools for boys rose from 3,859 to 3,868 but the number of pupils enrolled declined from 1,75,284 to 1,71,015.

Expenditure increased from Rs. 6,55,378 to Rs. 6,91,429.

Training of teachers.

205. The number of training institutions increased by 1 due to the re-opening of the Tura Training School which was temporarily closed during the preceding year. The aggregate enrolment of these schools advanced from 490 to 516. Of 6,323 teachers of vernacular in the province, 2,547 are returned as trained against the same number out of 6,074 in the previous year.

Law College and school.

206. On 31st March 1917 there were 45 students on the rolls of the Earle Law College against 35 on the corresponding date of the preceding year. The attached hostel which provides accommodation for 21 boarders had 13 inmates on the last day of the year. The record of examination results was fairly satisfactory.

The pleadership class at Gauhati had 13 students on its rolls on 31st March 1917 as against 16 in the preceding year.

Medical school.

207. The Berry-White Medical School had an enrolment of 149 students against 142 in the preceding year. Out of 20 students in the 4th-year class, 17 passed the final or diploma examination. The percentage of successful students at the first license examination was 76 against 73 in the previous year. Of the 149 students enrolled, 86 were residents of the Brahmaputra Valley, 33 of the Surma Valley, 10 were Khasis, 3 Lushais, 2 Garos, 11 Bengalis, 1 Naga, 1 Manipuri, 1 Gurkha and 1 Miri.

Thirty-nine scholarships were made tenable at the school and 44 free-studentships were granted.

208. Two engineering scholarships tenable at the Sibpur Engineering College and six scholarships tenable at the Dacca School of Engineering were awarded. The scheme for apprenticing Lushai youths to craftsmen progressed. The Tipkai Middle English School which offers a combination of Anglo-vernacular and technical instruction is reported to have made satisfactory progress. The grant-in-aid to the traffic training class at Gauhati for instruction in Railway traffic work was continued. The industrial schools at Shillong and Kohima continued. Fifteen apprentices against 17 in the previous year were trained as artisans and were given stipends from the Williamson Fund. Technical and industrial schools.

209. The number of tols of all classes declined from 87 to 80 and their enrolment from 1,524 to 1,500. Absence of funds rendered it impossible to proceed with the scheme of improving Sanskrit tols and of carrying into effect the proposal sanctioned for a central institution for higher Sanskrit learning. Tols.

210. The Government Madrasa at Sylhet continued to make satisfactory progress. The third senior class was added at the beginning of the year and the staff was duly strengthened. Development to the full senior course will be completed in 1918. Madrasas.

Several madrasas have accepted the option of returning themselves as vernacular schools with Islamic classes attached.

211. There were on 31st March 1917, 354 girls' schools for general education against 356 in the preceding year but their enrolment shews a slight advance. The number of girls at school including those in boys' schools rose from 27,281 in the preceding year to 27,665 during the year under report. The number in classes beyond the lower primary stage advanced. Female education.

212. The number of pupils in the three European schools was 228, of whom 210 were Europeans or Anglo-Indians, 3 Brahmins, 4 Muhammadans and 11 "others." The number of girls under instruction was 107 against 103 in the previous year. European education.

213. The subjoined statement gives the Muhammadan enrolment for the past 2 years in the various classes of recognised schools. Muhammadan education.

	1915-16.	1916-17.
High schools	2,254	2,409
Middle English schools	2,232	2,042
Middle vernacular schools	1,888	2,271
Primary schools	45,421	44,236

The number of Muhammadans at college increased by 1 only.

The scheme in regard to Islamic instruction in all classes of schools is yet in its infancy. Nothing definite can be stated as to its future. With the active support and willing co-operation of the Muhammadan community there is no reason why it should not be successful.

214. The hill schools except those in the Garo Hills return an advance in enrolment. The local officers in the Garo Hills explain the decrease as being due to the nomadic habits of the Garos and to floods and epidemic diseases in the plains areas. Hill Tribes.

215. There were 149 tea-garden schools against 167 in the preceding year. The decrease is mainly in C class schools, of which 96 existed in 1916-17 against 112 in the preceding year. Tea-garden schools.

216. Discipline in schools and colleges was not unsatisfactory. Discipline.

SECTION 3.—LITERATURE AND THE PRESS.

217. The total number of publications received and catalogued was 53 against 90 in the preceding year. They are classified as below according to the subjects dealt with :— Publications registered.

Biography	1
Drama	2
Geography	3
General text books and Keys	7
Medicine	1
Miscellaneous	15
Periodicals	21
Poetry	1
Religion	2
	53

Of these, 32 were educational and 21 non-educational, 49 were first editions and 4 new additions; 10 were in Assamese, 36 in Bengali, 1 in English, 1 in Lushai, 2 in Musalmani-Bengali, 1 in Nagri, 1 in Sanskrit-English and 1 in Bengali-Sanskrit.

Newspapers.

218. Two English, two Anglo-Vernacular, and nine vernacular newspapers, and eight periodicals were published during the year. The tone of the press continued to be unobjectionable.

SECTION 4.—SCIENTIFIC AND LITERARY SOCIETIES.

Nil.

SECTION 5.—ARTS AND SCIENES.

Nil.

CHAPTER VIII.

ARCHÆOLOGY.

Archæology.

219. The most interesting of the monuments protected under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, VII of 1904, are the rock inscriptions at the foot of the Kamakhya Hill near Gauhati, the Dargah of Shah Jalal at Sylhet, the copper temple of the Deori Chutiyas near Sadiya where human sacrifices used to be offered annually, the Kachari ruins at Dimapur, the rock-cut temples at Maibong, the ruins of the Ahom palaces at Rangpur and Garhgaon, and the temples at Jaisagar and Gaurisagar in the Sibsagar district. The majority of these monuments are maintained by the Public Works Department. Special repairs were carried out during the year by the Public Works Department to the Sibdole temple at Gaurisagar.

A project for the construction of a museum at Gauhati sanctioned by this Administration at an estimated cost of Rs. 37,443 awaits the allotment of funds.

CHAPTER IX.

MISCELLANEOUS.

SECTION 1.—Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction.

[See General Administration Report for 1911-12, Part I, page 128.]

SECTION 2.—Ecclesiastical.

Ecclesiastical.

220. The Ecclesiastical establishment of the province, maintained entirely or in part by this Administration, consists of the chaplaincy of Shillong and the State-aided chaplaincies of Silchar, Darrang, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur. The Rev. W. K. Drawbridge, Chaplain of Shillong, proceeded on leave out of India in May 1916, and charge of the chaplaincy was assumed by the Ven'ble W. K. Firminger, B.D., Archdeacon of Calcutta, until the beginning of October 1916. The chaplaincy remained vacant from October to December 1916, during which time the functions of the Chaplain were discharged by various clergymen of the province. The Rev. W. K. Drawbridge returned from leave and resumed charge in January 1917. The Chaplain of Shillong visited as usual the outstations of Gauhati and Dhubri, and inspected the cemetery at Cherrapunji. The chaplaincy of Silchar has been vacant since September 1916, when the Rev. W. E. MacFarlane proceeded on war service.

The Right Reverend the Bishop in Assam toured extensively in the province.

SECTION 3.—Stationery.

Stationery.

221. The value of the stationery supplied to the province was Rs. 50,734, including Rs. 13,360 for articles supplied to the Secretariat Press. The value of stationery consumed amounted to Rs. 45,039. There was a nett saving of Rs. 5,695 or over 11 per cent. on the allotment. Strict economy is being enforced in regard to the use of paper and of articles of stationery generally.

SECTION 4.—Printing.

Printing.

222. Cash receipts of the Secretariat Press decreased from Rs. 3,449 to Rs. 3,148 owing chiefly to a fall in the amount of printing work done for bodies financially independent of Government and other private customers, and expenditure from Rs. 1,19,527 to Rs. 1,05,253 owing to a general reduction of work on account of the war. The actual amount paid to workmen exceeded the value of outturn by Rs. 1,442, the loss occurring entirely in the Press and Machine Branch.

SECTION 5.—Veterinary Department.

[*See* Report of the Civil Veterinary Department of Assam for 1916-17.]

Staff.

223. The staff of the Department was increased by the appointment of two newly qualified assistants, while its strength was reduced by the loss of one who resigned. Six assistants were deputed to military duty, of whom one has returned. The staff under the Superintendent at the close of the year was 3 Inspectors and 32 Veterinary Assistants, of whom 27 were under Local Boards, one on the staff, three in reserve and one in hill districts. Four students obtained their diploma during the year and have been given appointments in the Department, and there are now 20 students in the Bengal Veterinary College. The difficulty of getting suitable recruits for the Department has thus been overcome by the improvement in the terms of service.

Cattle-disease.

224. There was an increase in the number of deaths from contagious disease among cattle reported during the year. Rinderpest, the mortality from which was very heavy in Kamrup, accounted for 20,817 of the 44,952 deaths reported. The value of inoculation was again demonstrated by the fact that only 578 or 1·4 per cent. of the 36,016 animals inoculated are reported to have died. There was an increase in the number of villages visited and animals treated locally, which is creditable in view of the reduction of staff owing to the absence of assistants on military duty.

Stock.

225. The scheme for the supply of good bulls from Manipur was further investigated and the recommendations contained in Mr. Blackwood's report engaged the attention of the Chief Commissioner.

Infirmaries.

226. The Veterinary hospitals at Silchar, Gauhati and Shillong were maintained by Government and provision was made with a view to their being utilized for animals requiring treatment in cases dealt with under the Cruelty to Animals Act.

Shillong: Printed and published by H. H. King, Superintendent, Assam Secretariat Printing Office:
(F. & M.) No. 47—400—21-1-1918.—K. C. G.

REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION OF ASSAM

FOR THE YEAR

1917-18.

OF THE
BOMBAY
BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

VIII
3

SHILLONG:
PRINTED AT THE ASSAM SECRETARIAT PRINTING OFFICE.

1919.

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BOMBAY BRANCH

OF THE

Royal Asiatic Society.

SHILLONG:

PRINTED BY H. E. KING, SUPERINTENDENT, ASSAM SECRETARIAT, PRESS.

PART I.

SUMMARY.

[Prescribed maximum length from 10 to 15 pages.]

PART I.

GENERAL SUMMARY.

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REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION OF ASSAM

FOR THE YEAR

1917–18.

PART I.—GENERAL SUMMARY.

War and the Administration.

1. At the beginning of the year, in response to a call for labourers to work behind the lines in France, the province undertook to raise 10,000 men. His Highness the Maharaja of Manipur contributed one corps of 2,000 men and 3 others of the same strength were raised in the hill districts, and were among the first to be completed and sail for France. Subsequently another company for France was raised in the Garo Hills and the Assam plains, and one for Mesopotamia in the Sylhet district while a good many marine ratings and other recruits for non-combatant branches were obtained. A double company of Assamese was raised and attached to the 3/8th Gurkha Rifles, and had more combatant recruits of this class been demanded, there is little doubt but that they could have been had. Further drafts were also sent to the Army from the Assam Rifles, making the total contribution 3,232 officers and men. A few young men joined the Bengali Regiment, and some the Royal Artillery, but among the educated classes there was more disposition to seek for enrolment in the Indian Section of the Indian Defence Force. The numbers offering themselves for enrolment in this force were not, however, sufficient to justify the formation of separate training centres in the province. The conversion of the Assam and Surma Valley Light Horse into Indian Defence Force units imposed a severe strain on the tea planters, and the more rigorous conditions resulted in a considerable decrease in numbers. Up to September 1918 the members of these two corps, other than Government servants, who had joined the Army was 237, while 162 civil officers of Government were serving in military capacities. The response to the appeal for contributions to the war loan was as good as could be expected in a year when most of the people were suffering from low prices for their agricultural produce and high prices for cloth, salt and all imported articles. The total subscriptions to the first war loan came to Rs. 26,00,000.

Political.

2. There was very little political agitation in the province, and less stir than might have been expected was caused by the visit of the Secretary of State in connection with the reform schemes. Still there has been a decided change in the attitude of the popular leaders in the Assam Valley whose demands are now modelled on those of the more advanced section of the National Congress. There was a renewal of the demand on a part of a section of the people of the Surma Valley for reunion with Bengal and the Zamindars of Goalpara district also declared themselves in favour of the incorporation of their district in Bengal. Towards the close of the year high prices resulted in outbreaks of looting of shops and markets, the people apparently thinking that the shopkeepers were profiteering.

Relations with Tributary States and Frontier Affairs.

3. In recognition of the loyal assistance rendered by His Highness Raja Chura Chand Singh of Manipur by raising and maintaining a double company of Manipuris for service in the British Army, by raising a labour corps of 2,000 men for service in France and by liberal contributions in money he was invested with the title of Commander of the Most Exalted Order of the British Empire and was made a hereditary Maharaja. Unfortunately a certain section of the Kuki tribes subjects of the

Manipur State, alarmed at the prospect of being sent to the scene of war and being ill-advised and misinformed as to the strength of the British forces, opposed all attempts to recruit for the labour corps and eventually broke into open rebellion. The columns of the Assam Rifles sent against them met with serious opposition, and had a considerable number of casualties. Though, in spite of the resistance of the Kukis, columns marched through the hills in all directions and destroyed a good many villages, the rebels, at the close of the year, were still unsubdued. Some of the leading chiefs have now surrendered and a campaign for the pacification of the hills has been organised in conjunction with the Government of Burma. The rebellion is confined to certain sections of the Kukis and extends neither to the Manipuris nor to the Nagas, though some disaffected Manipuris appear to have a hand in stirring up the trouble.

There was no internal trouble in either the Naga or the Lushai Hills; but in the latter district the post at South Vanlaiphai was raided more than once by the Chins on the borders, who were in rebellion against the Government of Burma. In consequence of repeated violation of the southern frontier of the Lushai Hills the Superintendent visited Zongling and other villages in the unadministered area with an escort. He met with a friendly reception, and passed necessary orders, but it is probable that further measures will be necessary in the near future to make an abiding settlement on that frontier. On the North-East Frontier the restriction on trans-frontier tours during the war prevented progress in the cultivation of friendly relations with the hill tribes. This is an unsatisfactory state of affairs and is calculated to lead to trouble in the future, but there was no serious disturbance during the year though since its close a party of Daflas made a raid on Helem in the Darrang district, far within the administrative border. An Engineer of the Assam-Bengal Railway, with a survey party, prospected for a suitable place at which to cross the Patkoi Range to the south of Lakhimpur district. He met with no interference from the local tribes.

Crops and condition of the people.

4. There was a bumper harvest of winter and summer rice. Jute suffered from floods in June and oilseeds from drought in the cold weather. There was food in plenty, but money was scarce owing to a serious fall in the price of agricultural produce. This and the high prices of imported articles adversely affected the material condition of the people in the plains.

The land revenue collections were slightly more than the current demand and over Rs. 65,000 were remitted, but heavy arrears of over Rs. 8 lakhs were outstanding at the end of the year, owing to the previous bad seasons and the low price of agricultural produce. About Rs. 1,00,000 were given as agriculturists' loans, while over Rs. 10 lakhs of previous advances were recovered, but the outstandings at the close of the year were some 30 lakhs.

Survey and Settlements.

5. Settlement operations in Cachar and in the Jaintia parganas of Sylhet were brought to a close. The settlement of Cachar yielded an increase of revenue of Rs. 1,66,993 or 31·77 per cent. and that of the Jaintia parganas an increase of Rs. 36,867 or 18·97 per cent. The record-of-rights was completed for the three permanently-settled parganas in Sylhet in which operations had been undertaken experimentally under the Bengal Tenancy Act.

Military Police.

6. With the approval of the Government of India the name of the Military Police was changed to "Assam Rifles." A temporary post of Deputy Inspector General of Police for the Assam Rifles was created and Colonel L. W. Shakespear, C.B., a distinguished officer who had formerly served in this frontier, was appointed to the post. The strength of each of the four battalions of Assam Rifles was maintained at approximately 1,000 rifles and 618 officers and men were sent as volunteers to Gurkha Regiments. In January 1918 the Kuki trouble made it necessary to stop sending drafts to the Army, as every available rifle was wanted for the local operations. Indeed the garrisons at the headquarters of three battalions were so depleted that it was thought advisable to obtain the loan of regular troops to act as a reserve. Two columns of 100 and 150 rifles were engaged for some months in helping the Burma Military Police to put down a rising in the Chin Hills, while a complete contingent of 500 rifles was lent to the Government of Bihar and Orissa in connection with the Bakri-Id riots there.

Crime.

7. There was an increase of 734 cases of cognizable crime, chiefly under the heads of housebreaking and theft. It was particularly marked in Cachar and was mainly due to the high price of cloth and other necessaries of life.

Jails.

8. The average daily jail population fell from 2,215 to 2,191. A small increase was made in the amount of accommodation which at the close of the year provided

for 2,834 prisoners. The death-rate, 13·23 per mille, was the lowest provincial jail death-rate recorded in India.

Municipalities.

9. Fifteen municipalities constituted under Act III (B.C.) of 1884 and seven unions constituted under Act V (B.C.) of 1876 were at work during the year. Two new unions were formed but had not commenced work before the end of the year. In accordance with the wishes of a majority of the non-official members of the Legislative Council the introduction of the Assam Municipal Bill has been postponed *sine die*. Municipal waterworks were successfully completed at Tezpur, Silchar, and Sylhet.

Local Boards.

10. There was no change in the constitution of the nineteen Local Boards. The North Sylhet Board was permitted to elect a non-official Chairman, but did not exercise the privilege till after the close of the year. The aggregate receipts of the Boards amounted to Rs. 20,73,952 and their expenditure to Rs. 20,79,639. Apart from Government grants earmarked for special purposes, Local Boards spent 31 per cent. of their available funds on education, 32 per cent. on communications and 16 per cent. on medical relief, the remainder being devoted to veterinary aid, water-supply and other objects. Sixty-four village authorities were at work. The experiment of village self-government is still at an early stage, but the results are reported to be distinctly promising.

Agriculture.

11. The development of the Agricultural Department was impeded by a shortage of superior officers, one Deputy Director being on military service. The principal experiment in progress is the cultivation of sugarcane on the Kamrup farm. A good crop of cane was raised on over 500 acres, but owing to delays in obtaining and setting up the necessary machinery the factory was unable to work off the crop, and there was a heavy loss. The Department did useful work in distributing seed potatoes and sugarcane setts, and is gradually teaching through its demonstrators the advantages of growing improved varieties of staple crops and of manuring the land.

Co-operative Societies.

12. The number of co-operative societies rose from 344 to 352, and the working capital from Rs. 10,59,308 to Rs. 10,92,445, whilst the number of members decreased from 19,700 to 19,183. Funds were not forthcoming for the new post of Registrar of Co-operative Societies and Director of Industries which was sanctioned in 1915, or for the increase of the subordinate staff of the department and consequently it was necessary to follow a cautious policy in the formation of new societies. Apart from difficulties of control the conditions of the year were unfavourable in Assam to any considerable expansion on healthy lines. Money was unusually scarce and the Registrar found great difficulty in financing the existing societies. Useful progress was made by a number of weavers' societies, and an interesting experiment was made in the formation of a co-operative store amongst the labour force of a tea garden.

Forests.

13. The total area of forests at the close of the year was 22,731 square miles, of which reserved forests accounted for 5,381 square miles. Additions to reserved forests during the year amounted to 470 square miles, and 329 square miles were under reservation at the close of the year. The absence of 10 out of the 13 Deputy and Assistant Conservators on military duty, the restrictions on expenditure and a general depression in the timber trade militated against the successful administration of the department. On the other hand, there was an extension of the demand for tea-box timber and for departmentally extracted sleepers. A substantial increase in revenue was also produced by the recent enhancement of grazing fees. The gross revenue rose from Rs. 11,56,828 to Rs. 13,99,147, and the surplus over expenditure from Rs. 4,76,525 to Rs. 7,52,270.

Tea.

14. In spite of an appreciable fall in prices and freight difficulties the tea industry continued to prosper. Nine new gardens were opened and, the total area under tea increased from 389,338 acres (revised) to 399,690 acres. The weather was on the whole favourable, and the outturn amounted to 243,127,292 lbs. of black tea and 521,414 lbs. of green tea as against 242,022,786 lbs. and 161,785 lbs., respectively, in the previous year. The strength of the permanent labour force increased from 461,305 to 471,270 and that of the temporary labour force from 45,899 to 47,117.

The importation of labour from outside Assam for the tea industry was the smallest recorded for many years. Good crops in the recruiting districts and an increased demand nearer home for industries connected with the war were the main causes of the decrease, whilst contributory causes were the raising of labour corps in certain of the recruiting districts for military service, a larger supply than usual of local labour owing to economic conditions in Assam, and a general disposition on the part of managers, in view of freight difficulties, to carry on without increasing the labour force more than was absolutely necessary. The total strength of the labour force at the close of the year was 940,368, representing a decrease of 16,348 compared

with the figures of the previous year. The number of complaints of fraudulent and irregular recruitment has declined steadily since the abolition of the professional recruiter and the establishment of the Assam Labour Board.

Trade. 15. The rail and river-borne trade of Assam increased in quantity from 20,418,982 to 22,666,607 maunds, and in value from Rs. 21,31,76,971 to Rs. 24,23,43,838. Imports decreased in quantity from 10,457,233 to 9,843,694 maunds, but owing to higher prices increased in value from Rs. 9,42,72,013 to Rs. 9,57,88,861. Exports increased in quantity from 9,961,748 to 12,822,913 maunds and in value from Rs. 11,89,04,958 to Rs. 14,65,54,977. The principal imports were manufactured cotton, iron and steel, grain and pulse, and sugar and the principal exports tea (representing 70·6 per cent. of the total value of exports), timber, unhusked rice and jute.

The registered figures of trade with Bhutan and the hill tribes expanded from twenty to thirty-three lakhs of rupees, imports and exports being approximately equal. The large increase reported was due mainly to certain improvements in the system of registration, but there was a steady growth in trans-frontier trade. Trade with Bhutan was responsible for 79·5 per cent. of the total. Amongst imports the most important items were woollen piece-goods, blankets, spices, ponies and cattle, hides and skins, musk and drugs, whilst yaks' tails, gold and silver also appeared. The chief articles of export were manufactured and raw silk, cotton piece-goods and yarn, husked rice and dried fish.

Excise. 16. For the third year in succession the depressing effects of the war together with the restrictive measures introduced during the previous years of prosperity led to a marked decrease in the demand for exciseable articles. The consumption of country spirit fell by 15,644 L. P. gallons, that of *ganja* by 105½ maunds and that of opium by 40½ maunds. There was consequently a considerable reduction in realisations from duty and as receipts from license fees were also lower than in the previous year there was a drop of over three per cent. in the total excise revenue.

Progress was made during the year with the policy of discouraging the comsumption of spirit in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, and the prevention of the spread of the opium habit in the North-East Frontier Tract also engaged attention.

Vital statistics. 17. Climatic conditions during the year under report were generally favourable and the year was on the whole a healthy one. The death-rate per mille fell from 28·59 in the previous year to 27·09, whilst the birth-rate rose from 30·52 to 31·35. The death-rate was slightly below the quinquennial average, whilst the birth-rate owing to the unfavourable conditions of the previous year in the Surma Valley, was lower than the average by 1·11. The mortality reported from cholera was below, and that from "fever" somewhat above the average. Otherwise there was little variation from the normal in the number of deaths reported from the principal diseases.

Hospitals and dispensaries. 18. Nine Civil Assistant Surgeons and nine Sub-Assistant Surgeons were deputed to military duty during the year; and the difficulty of finding qualified substitutes resulted in a further reduction in the number of hospitals and dispensaries from 215 to 210.

Lunatic Asylum. 19. The daily average strength in the Tezpur Lunatic Asylum was 341. The accommodation was increased by the construction of a new barrack, and the ventilation of the existing barracks was improved. As a result of these measures and of the careful attention paid to the health of the inmates the mortality rate, which was 14·44 per cent. in 1916, dropped to 5·56, the lowest recorded for any province in India.

Pasteur Institute. 20. Five hundred and sixty-nine patients underwent the anti-rabic treatment during the first year of the working of the Shillong Pasteur Institute. The patients, of whom 50 were Europeans and 519 Indians, came from every district of Assam, from 28 districts of Bengal and from two of Bihar and Orissa. The death-rate from hydrophobia amongst the patients was ·88 per cent. Useful work was done in the bacteriological and research section of the Institute in connection with cholera, typhoid fever, *kala-azar*, malaria, cerebro-spinal fever and diptheria.

Sanitation. 21. The spread of *kala-azar* to areas in Upper Assam which have hitherto been immune from it caused much anxiety during the year. Separate regulations, suited to ordinary villages and to tea gardens infected with the disease, were framed at a representative conference which met at Shillong in September 1917 and have been notified under the Expidemic Diseases Act. A detailed survey of the areas affected or likely to be affected was undertaken, and arrangements were made for the construction of an in-door hospital for the treatment of *kala-azar* patients by Sir Leonard Rogers' method.

22. Education continued to feel the effects of the economic depression resulting from the war. The total enrolment in public institutions decreased by 1·5 per cent. the decline occurring almost entirely in the lower classes of vernacular schools. The expenditure from all sources on education rose from Rs. 25,59,290 to Rs. 25,82,270. Education.

Collegiate education continues to attract an increasing number of students. The numbers at the close of the year were 811 against 688 in the previous year. The number of intermediate passed students rose from 140 to 158 and the number of graduates from 48 to 69. The affiliation of the Murarichand College was extended to include Arabic; there was no change in the affiliation of the Cotton College.

There were 35 high schools for boys as in the previous year, whilst middle English schools increased from 113 to 116. The enrolment was practically stationary in both classes of schools. School fees were enhanced, with no adverse affect on the enrolment, at certain centres where the demand for high school education far exceeds the supply.

The enrolment at vernacular schools of all grades fell approximately to the level of the figures for 1914-15, but as compared with the earlier year the number of pupils completing the lower primary course was higher by 20 per cent., and the number completing the middle vernacular course by 105 per cent. The capitation system of rewarding teachers of primary schools, which has been condemned for some years, was abolished and funds were granted to local bodies which will enable them to introduce improved arrangements for the payment of teachers on more flexible lines.

The Government Madrassa at Sylhet reached the full status of a senior Madrassa during the year.

A new school for European children of the poorer classes was opened at Haflong in the North Cachar Hills.

23. The total revenue realised within the province during the year was Rs. 1,93,07,374, the imperial receipts being Rs. 62,10,543, and provincial receipts Rs. 1,30,96,831. An assignment of Rs. 18,43,724, which was made from imperial to provincial funds, brought the nett provincial income to Rs. 1,49,40,555. The imperial assignment being left out of account the provincial receipts expanded by Rs. 2,94,525. Receipts from land revenue owing to the recovery of large arrears of 1916-17 when suspensions of payment were necessitated by floods, increased by Rs. 2,71,507; those from forests by Rs. 1,61,334, and those from income-tax by Rs. 75,438. On the other hand, excise revenue fell by Rs. 1,67,248, and receipts from stamps and registration also declined in sympathy with general economic conditions. The total provincial expenditure was Rs. 1,43,29,234, rather over a lakh less than in 1916-17. The province commenced the year with a balance of Rs. 21,20,213, and closed it with one of Rs. 27,31,534. Finance.

PART II.

THE REPORT.

[Prescribed maximum length—50 pages.]

PART II.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT.

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D.G. Shillong R.E.No 2519 of 1913

REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION OF ASSAM

FOR THE YEAR

1917-18.

PART II.—REPORT.

CHAPTER I.

PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY.

For—

SECTION 1.—Physical Features of the Country, Area, Climate and Chief Staples.

SECTION 2.—Historical Summary.

SECTION 3.—Form of Administration.

SECTION 4.—Character of Land Tenures, System of Surveys and Settlements.

SECTION 5.—Civil Divisions of British territory.

SECTION 6.—Details of the last Census, Tribes and Languages.

[See General Administration Report, 1911-1912, Part II, pages 1-75.]

SECTION 7.—CHANGES IN THE ADMINISTRATION.

1. The Hon'ble Sir Archdale Earle, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., held charge of the Administration throughout the year. No administrative changes of importance were made. Changes in the Administration.

WAR AND THE ADMINISTRATION.

2. Up to the end of 1916 Assam had been very little affected by the great war, and it may be said that the mass of the people had taken very little interest in it; even the entry of Turkey into the war hardly stirred the cultivators from their apathy. The year 1917 brought a decided change. To begin with the province responded to the call for labourers to work behind the lines in France by raising four battalions of 2,000 men each, one supplied by the State of Manipur and 3 others from 3 of the hill districts. Another company was raised among the Garos and people of the Assam plains, while the Sylhet district furnished a company for service in Mesopotamia. In all the contingents raised in the province, including subsequent drafts, numbered 10,434. Excellent accounts were received of their work in the theatre of the war, and they have now come back well pleased with themselves and considerably the richer for their enterprise. Excluding these corps some hundreds of recruits were obtained, chiefly in the Surma Valley, as marine ratings and for other miscellaneous work, and a good many men joined the Royal Artillery Depôt at Belgaum and the Bengali Regiment. War and the Administration.

The War Loan also, and the propagandist campaign in its support, helped to bring home to the people the progress of the war. The total investments from the province in the first War Loan amounted to Rs. 26,03,876. Larger contributions might have been obtained, but after a succession of bad harvests the people found themselves without a market for the surplus produce of the bumper harvest of 1917, while the price of cloth, salt, oil, and other imported necessaries, rose greatly. The

popular impression seems to have been that the rise in prices was due largely to profiteering on the part of merchants and shopkeepers, and this led to the looting of markets and shops in many places in Goalpara, the Surma Valley, and Upper Assam. Steps were taken to regulate the price of salt and kerosine oil, and would have been necessary in the case of cloth also, but the prices came down with the end of the war.

April 1917 witnessed the substitution of the Indian Defence Force for the old volunteers. The Assam Valley Light Horse and the Surma Valley Light Horse became units of the Indian Defence Force, retaining their old names. The change involved some decrease in numbers, as men over the age of 51, and those physically unfit for hard training, had to be excluded. The longer and more continuous training now required caused much inconvenience, and even hardship, in the case of those members of the Force who lived far from the training centres, but everyone did his best, and the Military authorities went as far as possible in adapting their requirements to the conditions of the country. The numbers at the close of the year stood at 75 officers and 931 men including 431 reservists, and 19 cadets. There seems to be a general agreement that the result was a decidedly better trained force than the old volunteers. No separate unit of the Indian branch of the Indian Defence Force was established in the province. Several young men offered themselves for enrolment, and some went to train in Calcutta, but the numbers were not large enough to warrant the formation of a separate training centre.

A double company of Assamese was raised and attached to the 3/8th Gurkha Rifles, and drafts were sent to it through the Gauhati Depôt. The Maharaja of Manipur also continued to send drafts to the Manipur Double Company, which went to Mesopotamia with the 39th Gorhwalis.

After the Delhi Conference the Local Administration undertook to raise two battalions of Native Infantry—one in either Valley. A good deal of enthusiasm for Military Service was evinced by some sections of the population, but ultimately owing to the difficulty of finding the necessary training staff, the Government of India were unable to accept the offer, and matters had not gone further than the enrolment of a few recruits when the signing of the armistice led to a cessation of further recruiting.

For the control of recruiting and the direction of war propaganda, and for other purposes connected with the war, a War Committee, consisting of officials and non-officials, with the Commissioner of the Division as President, was formed in each Valley. As, however, recruiting on a large scale was not attempted after their formation, and the war came to an end soon afterwards, there was not much work for them to do.

The policy of rigid economy in all branches of the Administration necessarily was continued throughout the year. The Administration released more officers for Military Service from its already depleted cadres. Altogether, in the 12 months ending in September 1918, 53 persons joined the Indian Army Reserve of Officers or the regular army, making a total of 162 officials and 237 non-officials. In the same period another draft of 200 men was sent from the Assam Rifles to the regular army, making the total contribution 3,232 officers and men.

SECTION 8.—Frontier Relations and Feudatory States.

[See General Administration Report for 1911-1912, Part II, pages 76-85.]

SECTION 9.—Relations with Tributary States and Frontier Tribes.

FEUDATORY STATES.

MANIPUR.

[Tribute :—Rupees 50,000. Population (1911) :—346,222. Average gross revenue for last five years :—Rupees 6,14,917. Military Police :—Sanctioned strength 5 officers and 132 men. Products :—Rice, vegetables, sugarcane, tobacco, wax, tea-seed and other forest products, ponies and cattle. Manufactures :—Silk, cotton cloth, brass and other metal utensils, mustard oil, a few articles of ivory and jewellery, some leather work and coarse salt. Minerals :—Iron, limestone and copper.]

[Maharaja :—His Highness Maharaja Chura Chand Singh, C.B.E., aged 32 years, caste Kshatriya. His Highness has three daughters by his first wife Rani Ngangbom Dhanamanjuri Ibamecha ; two sons, aged 10 and 7 years, by his second wife Rani Chingakhom Sayama Sakhi ; one daughter by his third wife Rani Ngangbom Preo Sakhi ; one son, aged 4 years, by his fifth wife Rani Haobom Lilabati.]

General. 3. During the year, in recognition of his services in connection with the war, His Highness was invested with the title of Maharaja as a hereditary distinction and was made a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

The Manipuri Double Company went on service with the Expeditionary Forces in Mesopotamia, and 101 men in all were sent as drafts to the depôt at Lansdowne. A labour corps, consisting of 2,000 Nagas and Kukis, was despatched to France in May 1917. His Highness the Maharaja proposed to recruit a labour corps of Manipuris to be commanded by himself for service in Egypt, but owing to various reasons, the proposal could not be carried out.

Hill Tribes.

4. The opposition of some of the Kuki chiefs to recruiting for the labour corps necessitated the abandonment of all idea of raising a second contingent, and developed into an open armed rebellion against the British Government. Columns of the Assam Rifles operating against the rebels met with determined resistance from the Kukis of the Thado, Howkip and Mangvum tribes The trouble spread beyond the borders of Manipur to the Kukis in the Chin Hills and Chinlwin tracts, and though several columns marched through the hills overcoming opposition, and though outposts were kept throughout the rains in suitable places, the rebels were not subdued. Some gave in, but others continued to harry the loyal villages and even raided in the Manipur valley. In the current year combined action is being taken by the forces at the disposal of the Governments of Assam and Burma for the suppression of the rebellion and the restoration of order.

It may be noted that the rebellion is confined to certain sections of the Kukis and extends neither to the Manipuris nor to the Nagas, though some disaffected Manipuris appear to have had a hand in stirring up the trouble.

Administration of the land revenue.

5. The land revenue demand including arrears was Rs. 5,13,075, and of this Rs. 4,12,896, or 80·47 per cent., were collected, Rs. 5,340 were remitted and Rs. 94,839 remained outstanding. House-tax was levied at the usual rate of Rs. 3 on all houses in the hills and annas ten on the houses of all Nagas and Kukis cultivating land in the valley or Jiribam. The demand was Rs. 75,932, of which Rs. 27,776 were collected, Rs. 6,953 were remitted and Rs. 41,203 remained unrealised. The large remission is mainly due to the exemption from house-tax of persons who joined the labour corps, and the Kuki trouble is responsible for the unsatisfactory collections.

Production and trade.

6. The area under rice cultivation was estimated at 148,760 acres and for all other crops together at 13,223 acres. The State sericultural operations in the hill villages proved a failure and the project has been abandoned. The Bombay-Burma Trading Corporation, Limited, have for the present finished their work of extraction of teak in the Kabaw Valley. During the year 1,739 cattle (including buffaloes) and 417 ponies were exported, of which 297 and 1, respectively, were brought from Burma. The embargo on the export of indigenous cattle was kept in force.

Justice.

7. The number of offences reported was 515 and the number of persons brought to trial 803. The civil courts disposed of 2,414 suits of an aggregate value of Rs. 1,17,714, and of 529 applications for execution of decrees.

Finance.

8. The gross total revenue of the State, excluding the "water rate," was Rs. 7,02,650. Forests, owing to the royalty on teak, showed an improvement of Rs. 43,804 and there was a substantial increase under the head of Land Revenue due to the collection of a large arrear outstanding from the previous year because of the distress caused by the floods of that year. The total expenditure was Rs. 8,93,808, including the investment of Rs. 1,00,000 in the Indian War Loan. Rs. 63,430 was met from the loan granted by the Government for the relief of distress and repair of damage caused by the floods and the balance from ordinary revenue. At the close of the year, the State was indebted to Government to the extent of Rs. 3,88,103; Rs. 1,13,103 being on account of the waterworks loan, and Rs. 2,75,000 on account of the floods. The closing balance, excluding the invested amounts, was Rs. 3,21,099.

Miscellaneous.

9. Three of the six dispensaries were closed, as the services of the compounders in charge were required for the operations against the Kukis. There is a veterinary dispensary in Imphal at which 2,995 animals were treated. Lower primary education is free, but not compulsory, and the cost to the State on all accounts of education was Rs. 50,995.

FRONTIER TRIBES.

General.

10. There was some unrest in the unadministered country to the south of the Lushai Hills, and the villages concerned were visited by the Superintendent during the year. A post at South Vonlaiphai in the Lushai Hills district was repeatedly attacked by the Chins from across the border and two of the three guilty villages were burnt. The tribes on the North-East Frontier gave no trouble, but soon after

PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY.

the close of the year there was a serious raid by Western Daflas on a Dafla settlement at Halem in Darrang.

Bhutias. 11. The usual fair was held at Darranga and was attended by about two thousand Bhutias, a decrease on the previous year. The returns, however, showed an increase in trade. The conduct of the Bhutias attending the fair was on the whole satisfactory.

Monbas. 12. The usual fair was held at Odalguri and the customary *posa* of Rs. 5,000 was paid to the two Jongpens of Talukjong. As usual, the Rupa and Sherpa Monbas came to the winter village of Doimara.

Akas. 13. The Akas gave no trouble. A quarrel between the Akas and the Mijis, who live north of the Aka country, was settled by the Political Officer. The Kutsum chief Tagi died during the year and was succeeded by his nephew Maha.

Daflas. 14. The Western Daflas caused no trouble. The Eastern Daflas were also well-behaved during the year. The Political Officer made a short tour in June to the villages of Lereng and Balisa and arrested four men who were concerned in the raid of March 1917 mentioned in the previous year's report. They were brought to trial; two were acquitted and two were sentenced to imprisonment. A great deal of unrest exists in the Dikrang and many villages have raided each other.

Hill Miris and Apa Tanangs. 15. The Hill Miris and Apa Tanangs came down to the plains in numbers slightly above the average. They were well-behaved. The Apa Tanangs produced the Dafla who was seized by them last year and the Apa Tanang who had been detained in prison on account of this seizure was released.

Abors. 16. The work of assessing to poll-tax the Abor villages in the foot hills which began in 1915-16 was completed during this year as far as the Simen river. The people are friendly and bring all their disputes to the British officers for decision. The independent Abor tribes have been peaceful on the whole. A state of war which was intiated in 1914 still exists between the right and left bank Midyongs. The effect is merely a blockade of each other from trading in Pasighat. There is no likelihood of anything else.

Mishmis. 17. The fine of a mythan each imposed on the three Bebejiya Mishmis, as reported last year, has not yet been paid. Taji Mideran, who was actively concerned in the murder of 3 Douanias at Dikrang in 1905, was arrested at Sadiya, tried and sentenced to death. Several slaves have been carried off from British territory by persons living in villages up the Sissiri Valley. Murders are of frequent occurrence among the independent Mishmi tribes, but they do not affect their relations with Government.

Khamtis and Singphos. 18. All the Singphos and Khamtis have been assessed to poll-tax, and are now British subjects.

Margherita, Rangpang, Barduaria, Namsangiya and Barmithonia Nagas. 19. The Sarkari Nagas of Margherita behaved well as usual. Ten cases of theft of iron from the collieries were reported and the Rangpangs were suspected again, but no thieves could be apprehended. The conduct of the other tribes was as usual good.

Naga Hills. 20. There was a good deal of restlessness across the frontier east of Mokokchang. The Kukis in this district were not affected by the Kuki disturbance in Manipur. They remained loyal, but there was much alarm in the Kacha Naga country and among some Kukis at the threats of the Manipur Kukis that they would come and cut up the villages which had not joined them. The placing of a post at Henima and the subsequent operations of the Henima Jampi column did much to restore confidence. The Angami Naga villages were also much alarmed owing to the concentration of Kukis near Lapvomi, but a guard sent out to the neighbourhood checked the activities of the Kukis. The Naga Labour Corps which went to France in April 1917 have since returned and their work in France is reported to have been most satisfactory

Khasi and Jaintia Hills. 21. The relations between the Siem of Mylliem and his subjects continue to improve, while the attitude of factious opposition, which was manifested by a few of his relatives and myntries, has been less pronounced. There has been no instance of overt defiance of the authority of the Siem of Mawsynram, but many of his subjects still maintain their attitude of sullen opposition. The Khasi Labour Corps left Shillong in detachments during April and May 1917 and proceeded to France where they rendered excellent service. They have since returned. Special efforts were made to augment the labour force employed on the extraction of corundum from the mines of Nongmaweit. Some 30,000 maunds of corundum were transported to the plains and a special road was constructed for the purpose.

22. In April 1917 a woman was carried off from Kaisi, a village in British territory to the west of Sherkor in the Lushai Hills, by the chief of Laikei in the unadministered country. There were also two serious raids attended with loss of life in the unadministered tract south of the Lushai Hills. In consequence of these disturbances and the raids on Lungchoi in Lungleh subdivision by the unadministered village of Chapi, mentioned in last year's report, the Superintendent of the Lushai Hills visited Zongling, Chapi, and Laikei, with an escort of 50 rifles. He met with no opposition and imposed fines on the two latter villages. The disturbances in Manipur did not greatly affect this district, the tribe immediately adjoining the border having remained loyal. Assistance was rendered to the Government of Burma in the repression of the disturbances in the Chin Hills. A post at South Vonlaiphai was also occupied by the 1st Assam Rifles in order to guard the Lungleh-Haka road. This post was repeatedly attacked by Chins from across the border and suffered several casualties. Two of the three guilty Chin villages have since been burnt. The Lushai Labour Corps left for France in April 1917, and has since returned. It is reported to have done good work. Lushai Hills, Garo Hills and Hill Tippera.

The Garos were quiet and well-behaved except a few misguided Laskers and their underlings who actively opposed recruitment of the Garo Labour Corps. Relations with the Raja of Hill Tippera continued to be friendly.

SECTION 10.—CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1917-18.]

23. Weather conditions were generally favourable to agriculture, and people harvested a bumper crop of winter and summer rice. Abundance of local rice and the absence of facilities for export caused the price of rice to fall far below the level of recent years, so that although food was plentiful money was scarce at a time when the cloth, salt, oil and other things the peasants wanted were dear. Condition of the people.

In the hill districts good crops were obtained, and in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills the family allotments received by the relatives of labourers who went to France, were a substantial help.

The influx of settlers from the neighbouring districts of Eastern Bengal, and particularly from Mymensingh, into Goalpara, Nowgong, and the Sunamganj subdivision of the Sylhet district continued. With the opening of the Hill Section of the Assam-Bengal Railway immigration from the Surma Valley into the district of Nowgong began again but not to any large extent.

Chap. II. ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAND.

CHAPTER II.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAND.

SECTION 1.—REALISATION OF THE REVENUE.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1917-18.]

General.

24. An account of the demand and collection of land revenue will be found in Chapter V, "Revenue and Finance." During the year the total settled area was 14,041 square miles against 13,936 square miles in the previous year. The current revenue demand rose from Rs. 75,55,516 to Rs. 76,74,808.

Permanently-settled estates.

25. There was no change in the area and revenue demand of the permanently-settled estates in the Assam Valley Districts Division. In the Surma Valley the number of such estates decreased by 3 and the revenue by Rs. 2. The whole demand was realised in the Assam Valley. In the Surma Valley the balance outstanding in Sylhet was Rs. 99,173.

Temporarily-settled estates.

26. The number of temporarily-settled estates rose from 11,20,474 to 11,39,117 and the area and revenue increased by 62,676 acres and Rs. 88,888, respectively, as compared with the previous year. These estates formed 43·18 per cent. of the total settled area of the province and contributed 90·06 per cent. of the total demand. The total area settled at full rates for ordinary cultivation in the Surma Valley and Hill Districts Division decreased from 7,50,182 acres to 7,49,633 acres and the revenue was less by Rs. 1,211 or ·15 per cent. than in the preceding year. Both the districts of Cachar and Sylhet showed a decrease, but there was some increase in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills due to the extension of wet rice cultivation in the Jowai subdivision. In the Assam Valley the area settled at full rates for ordinary cultivation rose from 2,221,322 acres to 2,280,658 acres, an increase of 59,336 acres, and the revenue demand assessed thereon from Rs. 52,15,134 to Rs. 53,02,969.

Remittance of revenue and local rates by special money-order.

27. In Sylhet, where alone the system of payment of Government revenue and local rates by special money-order obtains, 3,565 money-orders were made for the payment of a sum of Rs. 14,285.

Coercive means employed for the collection of land revenue.

28. The number of notices of demand issued was 104. The number of warrants of attachment issued rose from 39,289 to 49,349. The increase mainly occurred in the districts of Goalpara, Darrang, Nowgong, and Sibsagar, and was a result of the inability of the raiyats to find a market for their surplus produce. In 12,974 instances notices for sale of the estate issued, but the number of estates actually sold was only 399.

Processes.

29. The number of revenue processes served rose from 2,10,063 to 2,21,877 and the fees realised from Rs. 1,39,966 to Rs. 1,46,294.

Miscellaneous land revenue.

30. The demand on account of miscellaneous land revenue rose from Rs. 7,77,175 to Rs. 9,15,123, of which Rs. 8,72,115 were collected and Rs. 20,522 were remitted. The increase was due mainly to the new assessment on motor spirit.

Loans.

31. The amount advanced to agriculturists during the year was Rs. 1,01,560 The sum due for collecltion was Rs. 31,11,960, of which Rs. 10,29,509 were realised. Rs. 21,845 were remitted and Rs. 4,37,053 suspended, leaving a balance of Rs. 16,20,842. Sylhet alone was responsible for an overdue balance of Rs. 14,23,475 and the Lushai Hills for Rs. 1,26,162. The outstanding advances in the Lushai Hills amounted to Rs. 3,90,121, of which Rs. 31,568 were collected. In the district of Nowgong also collections were poor owing to the fall in the rice market and the high price of imported articles.

Other revenue work.

32. No irrigation or drainage works were undertaken during the year. The encroachment of the river below Dibrugarh compelled the Dibru-Sadiya Railway to make a new alignment of their line to the steamerghat.

Partitions.

33. The number of partition cases instituted during the year other than those dealt with under rule 214 of the Land Records Manual was 281, making with arrears from the last year a total of 488 for disposal, of which 263 cases were decided, leaving 225 pending at the close of the year.

SECTION 2.—SURVEYS AND SETTLEMENT.

[*See* Report on Survey and Settlement Operations in Assam for 1917-18.]

34. The control of the Assam Provincial Survey Department remained in the hands of the Superintendent, Eastern Circle, Survey of India, during the year. Survey.

The extension traverse survey of 19 villages in the Kamrup district, 60 in the Darrang district, 148 in the Garo Hills district, 25 in the Nowgong district, 22 in the Sibsagar district, 41 in the Lakhimpur district and 14 in the Sylhet district was completed by the Assam Traverse Party during the year under report. The areas, in square miles, surveyed in each of these districts were, Kamrup 78·09 square miles, Darrang 74·96 square miles, Garo Hills 52·42 square miles, Nowgong 22·32 square miles, Sibsagar 30·41 square miles, Lakhimpur 12·4 square miles and Sylhet 12 square miles. A traverse survey of 37 villages in the Goalpara district was made by the local land records establishment, whose work was checked by the Traverse Party.

In the Sylhet district 24·3 linear miles of boundaries in the Dohaliya Hills, and in the Goalpara district 55 square miles of the courses of the Brahmaputra and Gadadhar rivers in the neighbourhood of Dhubri, were traversed. The Patharia-Pratabgarh boundary, which had been temporarily demarcated by the Deputy Commissioner of the Sylhet district, was also traversed, as well as 8·8 linear miles in Tezpur town.

The Assam Provincial Drawing Office printed 42,958 copies of maps.

In the Survey School 28 students were admitted, out of which number 23 were passed as successful and 5 were disqualified in the annual examination. Two Extra Assistant Commissioners and 2 Sub-Deputy Collectors underwent a course of training in survey only at the school.

35. *Cachar.*—Operations continued in Cachar till 31st December 1917, when the extra staff was dispersed and the office formally closed leaving what little work remained to be done to be carried out by the Deputy Commissioner with the ordinary land records staff. The final report on the resettlement of this district was submitted in September last. Settlement.

Sylhet—Jaintia parganas.—The resettlement of the Jaintia parganas was completed during the year under report. The work done during the year consisted of the revenue attestation of the Jaintiapur and Kanairghat groups, completion of the new records, distribution of final *pattas*, and submission of proposals for the resettlement of the village fisheries in the above two groups and the resettlement of land under tea and waste land in tea estates. The operations were formally brought to a close on the 31st May 1918.

Sylhet—Dassana experiment.—The work remaining to be done was the trial of suits under sections 105 and 106 of the Bengal Tenancy Act (Act VIII of 1885). It was taken up by Babu Phani Bhusan Banarji, Munsiff, on deputation from Bengal, who was appointed Settlement Officer with regard to the area: he completed the work between 17th November 1917 and 15th April 1918. The final report on the settlement was submitted to Local Administration with Director of Land Records' letter No. 455A.—4661, dated the 25th September 1918.

Other settlement work.—The reclassification of land taken up after the last resettlement in Nowgong was taken up during the year and a completion report is now awaited.

Extension survey was also carried out by local agency in Cachar, Sylhet, Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang, Sibsagar, Lakhimpur and Garo Hills.

SECTION 3.—LAND RECORDS.

36. Three second-grade Supervisor Kanungoes were added to the sanctioned strength in Sylhet, Kamrup and Garo Hills. The staff of recorders was increased by 4 in Sylhet and 6 in Darrang. The number of resident recorders was increased by 16, but the exclusion of those who are so far only temporarily resident has reduced the total from 778 to 771. Land Records.

SECTION 4.—SETTLEMENT FOR SPECIAL CULTIVATION (WASTE LANDS).

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1917-18.]

37. Some 63,000 acres were added to the area settled for special cultivation, making the total 12,66,302 acres assessed to a revenue of Rs. 8.59.491. Settlement for special cultivation.

Chap. II. ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAND.

There were considerable new settlements of waste and disforested land, and several time expired grants were re-assessed.

The question of discontinuing the settlement of waste lands for tea cultivation under the provisions of Section 1 of the Settlement Rules was debated during the year. Eventually it was decided to leave the rules in force but to scrutinize closely all applications for settlement of land under them.

SECTION 6.—WARDS' AND ATTACHED ESTATES.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1917-18.]

General.

38. The number of estates under the management of the Court of Wards in the province remained unchanged at twelve, no estate having been released or brought under the management of the Court during the year.

Revenue, rent and cesses.

39. The total amount of revenue and cesses due to Government, including arrear was Rs. 59,331, of which Rs. 47,875 were paid, leaving a balance of Rs. 11,456. Of this sum, Rs. 11,444 were due from the Mechpara Estate. In the Khan Bahadur's and the Birasri Wards' Estates the arrears of rent and cesses due to superior landlords amounted to over a year's demand.

Collections.

40. The demand on account of rents and cesses due to all the estates, including an arrear demand of Rs. 9,16,039, amounted to Rs. 14,11,485. Of this sum, Rs. 4,44,030 (including an advance collection of Rs. 415 for the subsequent year) or 89·62 per cent. of the current demand were collected. In Mechpara the collections were 109 per cent. of the current demand. In all the other estates collections were below normal.

Debts.

41. The Kumar Ward's Estate paid Rs. 42,105 towards its debt, leaving Rs. 5,16,080 still due. The Das and Khan Bahadur Wards' Estates paid off Rs. 8,957 and Rs. 5,703, respectively. Repayment of debts was curtailed owing to the poor rent collection.

Management charges and improvement.

42. The percentage of the cost of management to the current demand was 13·24, as compared with 13·64 in the previous year.

The Mechpara and the Prithimpassa Estates spent Rs. 5,792 and Rs. 5,269, respectively, on schools, dispensaries, and other works of public utility. The Kumar Ward's Estate spent Rs. 2,990 on the maintenance of the Raja Girish Chandra High School at Sylhet and Rs. 565 on dispensaries and miscellaneous improvements.

SECTION 7.—REVENUE AND RENT-PAYING CLASSES.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1917-18.]

Relation between landlords and tenants.

43. Except in Sylhet and Goalpara where Bengal Act VIII of 1869 is in force there is no law of landlord and tenant in the province other than the Transfer of Property Act. The question of a Tenancy Act for Goalpara is still under the consideration of the Administration.

CHAPTER III.

PROTECTION.

SECTION 1.—Legislative Authority.

[See General Administration Report for 1911-1912, Part II, pages 92-94.]

SECTION 2.—Course of Legislation.

Meetings of the Council.

44. The Legislative Council met on six days for the discussion of the budget and the transaction of other business.

Acts passed.

45. The only Act passed was the Assam Excise (Amendment) Act, 1918, which deals with denatured spirit.

Bills discussed.

46. A bill to take the place of the existing Municipal Acts was introduced in Council, but its consideration was postponed *sine die* in accordance with the wishes of the non-official members of the Council.

SECTION 3.—Police.

ASSAM RIFLES.

Personnel.

47. During the year the Military Police were renamed Assam Rifles, and Colonel L. W. Shakespear, C.B., I.A., was appointed Deputy Inspector General for Assam Rifles. In November 1917 he took charge of his new duties. The following officers reverted to Military duty :—

Major A. H. Arbuthnott, Major E. L. Croslegh, Major F. K. Hensley Captain H. R. C. Lane, Captain J. S. Ring, Captain T. A. Digby, Captain M. Ostrehan, and Captain G. J. E. Manisty.

The officers who joined the Assam Rifles are :—

Major A. Vickers, Lieutenant-Colonel G. R. Row (Retired), Captain H. L. F. Falkland, Major H. D. Cloete, M.C., Captain G. B. Davies, Captain G. J. E. Manisty (since reverted), 2nd Lieutenant E. J. Hooper, I. A. R. O., Lieutenant J. F. B. Sanderson, Lieutenant J. H. Copeland, I. A. R. O., Captain P. B. Hebbert, and Lieutenant H. I. Halliday, I. A. R. O. Early in 1918, Lieutenants Parry, Walker, Prior, and Carter, all of the Indian Army Reserve of Officers were attached to the force for the purpose of the operations against the Kukis.

The number of officers and men, including signallers, of all ranks sent to Gurkha Regiments as volunteers during the year was 618, bringing the total at the end of the year to 3,166 officers and men. With the consent of the Government of India, the despatch of drafts was suspended from March to September 1917. It was again suspended from January 1918 owing to the frontier disturbances.

Strength and distribution.

48. The enlistment of recruits fell from 2,493 in 1916 to 782 in 1917. The variation is due to the despatch of drafts to the army having been suspended for some time. The percentage of Gurkhas among the recruits was 96·29 against 89·45 in 1916.

Efficiency.

49. The despatch of many of the best Non-Commissoned Officers and old soldier to the army necessarily detracted from the efficiency of the force. Also the concentration of attention on the preparation of drafts for the army interfered with the preparation of the battalions for frontier warfare, and the unexpected call for operations on a large scale disclosed sundry defects in equipment and training, which efforts have been made to rectify. In spite of these defects, however, the columns engaged in the operations in the Chin and Manipur hills have done excellent work and well maintained the character of the force for pluck and initiative.

Casualties.

50. Casualties increased under the heads " retirements on pension or gratuity ", " resignations " and " failures of men to return from leave ", but decreased under the heads " dismissals ", " discharges ", " desertions ", and " deaths ". The increase in retirements was due to a large number of men completing 30 years' qualifying service during the year and to a large number of wounded soldiers returned from the field having to be invalided.

Health.

51. The percentage of admissions into hospital on the actual strength was 70·25, and there were 35 deaths. Fever, pneumonia and phthisis were together responsible for more than half the deaths.

PROTECTION.

Military operations and frontier outposts.

52. A detachment of 500 rifles was lent to the Government of Bihar and Orissa for the suppression of the Bakr-Id riots in Bihar. Two columns of 150 and 100 rifles respectively co-operated with the Burma Military Police in suppressing a rising in the Chin Hills, while other forces in the Lushai Hills moved in support. In September 50 rifles under Captain Coote formed an escort to the Political Agent, Manipur, when he went to arrest the Chief of Mombi, and from January 1918 onwards strong columns were engaged in the suppression of the Kuki rebellion, the full story of which will be told elsewhere.

The outposts on the Lushai Hills frontier had to be strengthened in consequence of unrest among the tribes on the Lushai border. The Tirup guard in Lakhimpur was increased in order to check the thefts by Nagas of iron from the railway at Margherita.

CIVIL POLICE.

Strength.

53. The sanctioned strength of the force was increased by 16 officers and men making the total on the 31st December 296 officers and 3,202 men. The force is still hardly sufficient for its duties. In particular the ordinary reserve cannot provide enough men for escorts as well as for leave vacancies. Five hundred and thirty-seven men were recruited, of whom 388 or 72·2 per cent. were enlisted locally.

Training and conduct.

54. The standard of discipline of the civil police was fair. The number of rewards for successful detection and other good work was 1,080. Only sixty-seven men and no officer were convicted in the criminal courts. Departmental punishments also fell from 937 to 727. The number of criminal charges brought against the police was 99, and of 90 enquired into only 41 were found to be true. There were 20 serious cases of torture, bribery, and extortion, of which 5 ended in conviction, 11 were held to be false, and the rest were doubtful or undecided.

The system of drilling Sub-Inspectors at the headquarters of the district and the men at police stations was continued with good results.

Health.

55. Admissions to hospital fell from 1,384 in 1916 to 1,328 during the year, but the number of deaths rose from 32 to 45. Eighteen of the deaths, however, were of men on leave. More than half of the total number of deaths were from malarial fever. Mosquito-nets were supplied to men at the remaining unhealthy stations.

Reserve.

56. The armed reserves, comprising 281 officers and men, were in all districts well drilled and well disciplined and acquitted themselves well when used in quelling local disturbances.

There was no serious work for them in 1917 but the hât looting in 1918, coming at a time when the Assam Rifles were fully occupied on the frontier, put to the test the capacity of the Civil Police to deal with widespread disorder. They did exceedingly well. The Sylhet Assam Police Reserve also furnished a contingent to guard the North Cachar Hills against a threatened Kuki raid.

Railway Police.

57. The sanctioned strength of the Railway Police was increased during the year by one Sub-Inspector and eleven constables. There were 41 cases of running train thefts and 237 missing goods cases. Of the latter only 120 were found to be due to theft or misappropriation. In June 1917 the Local Administration approved of constables' wearing uniform instead of plain cloths when patrolling trains running at night. This change is reported to have resulted in a marked decrease of cases of theft from running trains. There were 15 cases of stones being thrown at trains, and 16 cases of obstruction. There were 190 railway accidents, of which 40 were attended with loss of life. This is a decrease on the preceding year.

River Police.

58. Both in Sylhet and Goalpara the River Police had hard work during the year. There was an outbreak of river dacoities in Sylhet, necessitating the temporary reinforcement of the river patrols by three extra boats. A gang of run-away Gains or river Gypsies from the Tipperah district was responsible for the outbreak. There discovery and arrest has since led to a great drop in crime. In the Goalpara district besides patrolling the waterways, the River Police succeeded in arresting six absconding members of the Chain Mallah gang of the Mirzapur district.

Rural Police.

59. There were 6,532 dafadars and chaukidars. Their work is said to have improved, chiefly owing to better supervision by the Circle Officers in Sylhet, and to Thana officers taking the chaukidars more into their confidence. The number of punishments increased from 53·08 to 55·74 per cent. of the force, but there was also a marked rise in the number of chaukidar rewarded, which was 980 against 428 in 1916.

Finance.

60. The total net cost of the Department during the financial year 1917-18 was Rs. 23,67,903 against Rs. 23,80,863 in 1916. This decrease occurred mainly under the head Police buildings, and was due to the curtailment of such expenditure in consequence of war economy.

61. The number of cognizable cases increased by 734. Of those dealt with by the Police 35·7 per cent. were brought to trial as compared with 32·1 per cent. in 1916. The percentage of convictions was 76·72 as compared with 87·24 in the preceding year. Crime.

There were 12,297 cases of serious crime in the year 1917, an increase of 862 over the number in 1916. The increase occurred under almost every head, but was marked under the heads of dacoity and burglary. It is attributed to economic pressure due to the abnormal rise in the price of food stuffs and cloth. True cases of dacoity rose from 9 to 25 during the year. Particular attention was drawn to the outbreak of house-breaking with thefts in Cachar, but fortunately it did not continue long.

The number of cases remanded more than six times was decreased slightly. There is room for much improvement in this respect, but only 42·4 per cent. of all police cases were disposed of in two hearings. Provincial Statement J.

62. During the year 1917 there was no political crime of importance. In 1918 important arrests of revolutionary conspirators were made in Gauhati, the police gallantly effecting captures in spite of being fired on. Political crime.

63. There was no change either in the permanent or the temporary strength of the Criminal Investigation Department. Miscellaneous.

The Department dealt with some cases of murder, dacoity, coining and note forgery, and the officers were kept very busy throughout the year with enquiries into matters of a political nature.

There was no change in the staff of the Finger Print Bureau. The number of search slips received during the year was 1,297, and previous convictions were traced in 135 cases.

SECTION 4.—Criminal Justice, Plains Districts.

64. The permanent staff employed on criminal work in the plains portion of the province consisted of two Sessions Judges, one Additional Sessions Judge, eight District Magistrates, sixty-four Subordinate Stipendiary Magistrates and twenty-three Honorary Magistrates. There were also in the Assam Valley a temporary Additional Sessions Judge for six months and a temporary Assistant Sessions Judge throughout the year. Staff.

The following statement gives the figures for the past three years of offences reported, cases accepted as true, and cases brought to trial with the ratio of complaints dismissed or cases struck off as false to the total of cases instituted, and the ratio of persons convicted to persons tried :—

Year.	Cases reported.	Cases reported as true.	Cases brought to trial.	Ratio of complaints dismissed.	Ratio of persons convicted to persons tried.
1	2	3	4	5	6
				Per cent.	Per cent.
1917	41,165	29,793	19,228	28·3	42·2
1916	43,111	30,606	20,177	28·9	43·5
1915	41,951	28,649	19,416	32·4	42·2

65. Of 31,234 persons whose cases were decided by Magistrates, 13,181 were convicted, 4,255 on summary and 8,926 on regular trial. Two hundred and thirty-seven cases were committed to the Sessions, and 19,107 were finally disposed of; 1,018 cases were pending at the close of the year. Of the cases disposed of 25·8 per cent. were tried under summary procedure. Magistrates' Courts.

Sixty-five thousand eight hundred and sixteen witnesses were examined. Of these 70·3 per cent. were discharged on the first day of the trial and the number detained for more than three days was 1,431 against 2,619 in the previous year.

At the close of the year 2,175 persons were awaiting trial and 173 were in custody.

Magistrates sentenced 3,338 persons to imprisonment, 9,346 to fine and 141 to whipping, and ordered 188 persons to fulfil contracts under Act XIII of 1859. The

fines imposed amounted to Rs. 1,33,684, of which Rs. 1,13,220 were realized, Rs. 21,998 were paid as compensation to complainants.

Bonds for keeping the peace were taken from 581 persons and 308 persons were required to furnish security for good behaviour. In 94 cases complainants were found to have brought frivolous or vexatious charges and were ordered to pay compensation to the accused.

Courts of Sessions.

66. Two hundred and thirty-three cases involving 551 persons were disposed of by Sessions Courts. Three hundred and eleven persons were convicted, 212 were discharged or acquitted and in the case of 28 reference was made to the High Court.

Eleven persons were sentenced to death but in five cases the High Court commuted the sentence to transportation for life.

Seven persons were sentenced to transportation for life, 299 to rigorous imprisonment and 17 to fine. A hundred and ninety-nine persons were tried by juries. In 40 instances the Judge disapproved the verdict of the jury and referred the cases of 17 persons to the High Court under section 307 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. The High Court disposed of 12 references, upholding the verdict of the jury in 5, reversing it in 2, and modifying it in 3 cases.

The number of witnesses examined in courts of session was 2,435, of whom 730 were detained for more than three days. The average duration of cases in Sessions Courts was 46·7 days.

Appellate Jurisdiction. The High Court.

67. The High Court disposed of 86 appeals during the year. The sentences passed in the Sessions Courts were upheld in 71 cases and varied in 13—six appeals were pending at the close of the year.

Sessions Courts.

68. Six hundred and sixty appeals involving 1,252 persons were disposed of with the result that the original sentences were confirmed in 57·2 per cent., modified in 20·9 per cent. and reversed in 21 per cent. of the cases. New trials were ordered in the cases of 11 persons.

Magistrates.

69. District Magistrates disposed of the appeals of 394 persons, dismissing the appeals in 66 per cent. of the cases, modifying the original sentence in 6·1 per cent. and reversing in 26·3 per cent. New trials were ordered in the cases of 3 persons.

Revision.

70. Applications for revision of orders passed by lower courts were decided in 150 cases by the High Court, in 392 cases by the Courts of Sessions and in 188 cases by District Magistrates.

Receipts and Expenditure.

71. The charges incurred in criminal cases in Assam amounted to Rs. 4,09,043 and the receipts to Rs. 2,24,096. The charges exceeded those of 1916 by Rs. 7,828 and the receipts decreased by Rs. 5,673.

Hill districts and frontier tracts.

72. One thousand and fifty-six cases involving 1,854 persons were brought to trial in hill districts and frontier tracts. In these cases 1,211 persons were convicted, 570 were acquitted or discharged; 5 died, escaped or transferred and 68 remained under trial at the end of the year.

Thirty persons appealed against the sentences of lower courts. In three cases the original order was modified and in one case the order was reversed.

SECTION 5.—JAILS.

[*See* report on the Jail Administration in the Province of Assam for the year 1917 and Statistics of British India Part VI.]

General.

73. There was no change in the number of jails and sub-jails.

Population.

74. The year opened with 2,184 prisoners of all classes against 2,083 in the previous year. The number of admissions rose from 10,328 in 1916 to 11,049 and of discharges from 10,227 to 11,004, leaving 2,229 prisoners in confinement at the close of the year. The daily average number of prisoners of all classes decreased from 2,215·44 to 2,191·47.

Juvenile female and literate offenders.

75. Of the total number of convicts admitted to jails and sub-jails during the year, 53·89 per cent. were Hindus and Sikhs, 41·09 per cent. Muhammadans, ·17 per cent. Christians, ·17 per cent. Buddhists and Jains, while 4·67 per cent. belonged to other classes. Of the total number, 112 were females and 4 persons were under 16 years of age; the percentage of literate convicts was 3·70.

Under trial prisoners.

76. The daily average number of under trial prisoners rose from 225·98 to 271·90 and the average period of detention in Magistrate's cases was 14·16 days against 13·89 days in the preceding year. Detention over 3 months occurred in 6 jails and 2 sub-jails, and affected 22 cases.

77. The number of civil prisoners received during the year was 71 against 75 in the preceding year. Civil prisoners.

78. Seven convicts escaped against nine in the previous year. Of these, three escapes occurred from inside and four from outside the jails, and six of the escaped convicts were recaptured during the year. Two under-trial prisoners also escaped, both being recaptured during the year. The number of jail offences committed by convicts decreased from 4,090 to 3,807. Sixteen convicts were punished by the criminal courts while 2,560 minor and 1,236 major punishments were inflicted by Superintendents of Jails. Discipline.

79. The daily average number of sick fell from 92·17 to 84·31. The death-rate per mille of average strength was 13·23 against 18·51 in 1916. This was the lowest death-rate in jails over the whole of India during the year under report. The number of admissions of convict patients suffering from tubercle of the lungs increased from 14 to 16, and the number of deaths fell from 8 to 7. The total accommodation available in jails and sub-jails on the last day of the year was for 2,834 prisoners, representing an addition of 29 beds as compared with the previous year. Health.

80. An average of 662·95 or 35·25 per cent. of prisoners was employed on manufactures and 76·50 or 4·07 per cent. on extra-mural work. The average number of prisoners employed on unremunerative work increased from 25·49 to 29·64, as in many jails sufficient remunerative work could not be found. With the gradual increase in the average convict population, the problem of finding employment is becoming acute. The gross profits on the employment of convicts in the manufactory department rose from Rs. 64,813 to Rs. 70,214. Employment

81. The expenditure on guarding and maintaining prisoners, including the cost of buildings and repairs, increased from Rs. 2,55,808 to Rs. 2,59,668 and the average cost per head of average strength from Rs. 115-7-5 to Rs. 118-7-10 as compared with the previous year. The net cost of the department was Rs. 2,02,570 against Rs. 1,98,195 and the net cost per head of average strength was Rs. 92-7-0 against Rs. 89-8-0 as compared with the previous year. Finance.

SECTION 6.—CIVIL JUSTICE.

PLAINS DISTRICTS.

82. The civil judicial staff of the province consisted of two District Judges, one Additional District Judge, nine Subordinate Judges and twenty-nine Munsifs. Of these, two Subordinate Judges and ten Munsifs employed in the district of Sylhet were members of the Judicial Branch of the Provincial Civil Service, and the remainder were executive officers vested with civil judicial powers. The temporary staff consisted of one District and Sessions Judge, two Subordinate Judges, and one Munsif. Staff.

83. The number of original suits instituted was 47,101, an increase of 6,912 over the figures of the previous year. The district of Sylhet was responsible for nearly the whole increase. Of 57,871 suits for disposal, 47,632 were decided. The number of cases pending over one year fell from 249 to 179. Suits.

Of the suits instituted 33,386 were for money or moveables, 9,810 were rent suits, and 3,905 title and other suits. There was a decrease in the average duration of suits in the courts of Subordinate Judges and Munsifs. Of the suits disposed of 66·9 per cent. were decided in favour of the plaintiff, 25·2 per cent. in favour of the defendant, and the rest were compromised.

84. Of the total number of applications for execution on the files 26,122 were disposed of. Full satisfaction was obtained in 4,073 and partial satisfaction in 6,125 cases, the total amount realized being Rs. 7,37,340. Execution proceedings.

85. The number of miscellaneous cases of a judicial nature instituted during the year was 4,191. Four thousand and two hundred eighty cases were disposed of and 764 cases were pending at the close of the year. Miscellaneous.

86. There were 291 appeals from decrees before the High Court, of which 110 were decided. The decree of the lower court was reversed in 3 and confirmed in 35 cases. Eight cases were remanded to the lower courts. Most of the remaining appeals were summarily rejected. Appeals—(*a*) In the High Court.

87. The number of appeals before civil courts was 2,024, of which 1,150 were disposed of, leaving 888 appeals pending at the close of the year. Of the pending appeals, 119 were over one year old as compared with 48 in 1916. (*b*) In Courts subordinate to the High Court.

The decision of the lower courts were affirmed in 58·8 per cent., modified in 13·6 per cent. and reversed in 21·2 per cent. of the appeals heard.

PROTECTION.

Receipts and charges.

88. Receipts rose from Rs. 7,05,190 to Rs. 7,88,691 while the expenditure fell from Rs. 2,91,842 to Rs. 2,89,771.

Hill Districts and Frontier Tracts.

89. In the hill districts 1,489 suits of an aggregate value of Rs. 2,45,426 were instituted. The number of suits for disposal was 1,801 of which 156 were transferred, 1,507 decided and 138 left pending. Of the 48 appeals before the courts, 43 were disposed of. In 17 cases the order of the lower court was confirmed, in 12 it was reversed and 4 modified.

SECTION 7.—REGISTRATION.

[*See* statistical Returns of the Registration Department in Assam for the year 1917, Report on the working of the Indian Companies Act, VII of 1913, in the province of Assam for the year 1917-18, and the Report on the working of the Muhammadan Marriages and Divorces Registration Act, 1876 (Bengal Act I of 1876), the Qazis Act, XII of 1880, and the Special Marriages Act, III of 1872, in the province of Assam for the year 1917-18; statistics of British India, Part VI.]

General.

90. The number of offices at work at the close of the year was 39, as in the previous year. Since the close of the year an experimental whole-time office has been opened at Bhanga Bazar in the Surma Valley.

Documents.

91. The number of documents registered fell from 90,271 in 1916 to 89,113 in 1917. The decrease was partly due to heavy floods and partly to the gradual termination of Survey and Settlement operations in the district of Cachar.

Receipts and expenditure.

92. Receipts fell from Rs. 1,05,653 in 1916 to Rs. 1,01,813 in 1917, while expenditure rose from Rs. 66,480 to Rs. 68,009.

Muhammadan Marriages and Divorces Registration Act.

93. As in the previous year the number of offices at work was 35. Since the close of the year two new offices, one at Gowainghat and the other at Kanairghat in the Surma Valley have been opened.

The number of ceremonies registered rose from 4,999 in 1916-17 to 6,011 in 1917-18, the increase occurring in the district of Sylhet.

One meeting of the permanent committee for the supervision of Muhammadan Marriage Registrars and Qazis was held during the year. The aggregate income of these Registrars increased from Rs. 7,623 to Rs. 9,538. Their conduct was generally satisfactory.

Indian Companies Act.

94. Four companies, including one private company limited by shares, were registered during the year, as against three in the preceding year. One company went into voluntary liquidation, and the liquidation of another was ordered by the court under section 162 of Act VII of 1913. Three companies were struck off the register, and two companies which were struck off the register under section 247 of the Indian Companies Act, 1913, were restored. Three companies were finally dissolved during the year. At the close of the year there were 58 companies limited by shares at work, with an aggregate paid up capital of Rs. 27,37,948 as against 55 companies and a paid up capital of Rs. 24,71,726 at the close of the previous year.

Provident Insurance Societies Act.

95. There were three provident insurance societies at work during the year under report. Complaints were received against one of these, and the advisability of instituting an enquiry under section 17 of the Provident Insurance Societies Act, 1912, is under consideration.

SECTION 8.—MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION.

[*See* Resolution reviewing the Reports on the working of Municipalities in Assam during the year 1917-18; Statistics of British India, Part VIII.]

Constitution.

96. During the course of the year Act III (B.C.) of 1884 was introduced into the Barpeta Municipality in place of Act V (B.C.) of 1876, and unions were constituted at Palasbari in the Kamrup district and at Gauripur in the Goalpara district under Act V (B.C.) of 1876. The boundaries of the Shillong, Gauhati and Karimganj Municipalities were extended during the year. The number of meetings held by municipal bodies decreased from 293 to 278. The average percentage of attendance was practically stationary, being 59·73 as against 59·29 in the preceding year.

Taxation.

97. General or partial revisions of assessment were carried out in six municipalities, and resulted in a substantial increase of income at Silchar and Jorhat. The number of rate-payers rose from 23,799 to 24,651, and the percentage of rate-payers to the total urban population from 18·14 to 18·77. The average incidence of taxation per head of population rose from Rs. 2-5-1 to Rs. 2-8-4.

98. The total income of municipal institutions, excluding opening balances, amounted to Rs. 5,78,430, or Rs. 38,269 more than the figures of the previous year. Receipts under the head "Grants and contributions" amounted to Rs. 1,20,244 against Rs. 1,31,734 in the preceding year, the decrease being due to a reduction in Government grants from Rs. 1,26,096 to Rs. 1,13,052. Income.

99. The total expenditure of the year amounted to Rs. 6,78,916 as compared with Rs. 8.09,693 in 1916-17. Excluding repayments of loans, advances, deposits, etc., the ordinary expenditure during the year amounted to Rs. 6,52,247, representing a decrease of Rs. 1,41,681 from the figures of the preceding year. Expenditure.

100. The capital outlay and maintenance charges on account of water-supply were Rs. 1,12,286 and Rs. 65,079 against Rs. 2,80,727 and Rs. 39,358, respectively, in the previous year. The water-works at Silchar, Sylhet, and Tezpur were successfully completed during the year. The water-supply of a portion of the Shillong Municipality was augmented with beneficial results to the health of the area. Water-supply.

101. The expenditure on public works during the year under review was Rs. 1,06,459, or Rs. 1,957 less than in the preceding year. A total sum of Rs. 79,650 was spent on the construction and maintenance of roads. Public Works.

102. The expenditure on conservancy fell from Rs. 1,71,449 to Rs. 1,65,283. The conservancy improvement scheme in Sylhet, towards which a Government grant of Rs. 16,200 was sanctioned, was completed except for one item, which awaits the completion of land acquisition proceedings. Minor improvements to conservancy arrangements were effected in many towns, and the percentage of expenditure on conservancy to the total municipal expenditure rose from 21·59 to 25·34. Conservancy and drainage.

The capital outlay and maintenance charges on drainage were Rs. 3,414 and Rs. 10,505 against Rs. 3,022 and Rs. 10,302, respectively, in the preceding year. Minor improvements were effected in several municipalities. A Government grant of Rs. 5,000 was made to the Gauhati Municipality for the improvement of the drains of the Kayapati, a scheme which is receiving welcome assistance from the Marwari residents of the quarter.

103. The aggregate closing balances amounted to Rs. 1,44,624 or Rs. 2,410 less than those of the preceding year, and the actual balance, excluding the value of uncashed cheques, fell from Rs. 1,43,724 to Rs. 1,42,788. Five municipalities had loans outstanding at the close of the year. The Dibrugarh Municipality, owing entirely to its flagrant neglect of the elementary duty of collecting its dues, ended the year with a very inadequate closing balance. The financial position of the Sylhet Municipality is under examination. The remaining municipal institutions were financially sound. Financial position.

104. The accounts of the Silchar, Sylhet, Habiganj, Karimganj, Sunamganj, Shillong, Gauhati, Barpeta, Tezpur, Nowgong, Jorhat, Sibsagar and Dibrugarh Municipalities and of the Golaghat, Mangaldai and Nazira unions were examined and audited by the Examiner of Local Fund Accounts during the year under report. The effects of dishonest practices and insufficient supervision were still apparent in the accounts of the Silchar and Sylhet municipalities. No fresh case of embezzlement was brought to light during the year. Audit.

105. In accordance with the wishes of a majority of the non-official members of the Legislative Council, the introduction of the Assam Municipal Bill has been postponed *sine die*. General.

SECTION 9.—Local Boards.

[*See* Resolution on the working of Local Boards in Assam during 1917-18; Statistics of British India, Part VIII.]

106. As in the previous year, the nineteen Local Boards were composed of 76 *ex-officio*, 45 nominated and 202 elected members. The Deputy Commissioner or the Subdivisional Officer was in all cases appointed Chairman. The North Sylhet Local Board was permitted to elect its Chairman but did not exercise the privilege till the beginning of the current year. Composition of Local Boards.

The total number of successful meetings held by the Boards fell from 175 to 162, and the average percentage of attendance from 65·66 to 63·47.

107. The opening balances of the Boards aggregated Rs. 5,39,480. Their receipts amounted to Rs. 20,73,952 and their expenditure to Rs. 20,79,639, leaving an aggregate closing balance of Rs. 5,33,793. The decrease in the Boards' total income excluding loans, deposits and advances, from Rs. 20,43,532 to Rs. 19,86,204 was chiefly due to a reduction in Government grants from Rs. 9,27,106 to Rs. 7,86,798. Finance.

The work of the year. (a) Education.

108. The total expenditure incurred by Boards on education was Rs. 7,57,003, which is very slightly in excess of the amount spent the year before. Of this amount, Rs. 3,39,737 was met from Government contributions, against Rs. 3,44,177 in the previous year.

(b) Medical.

109. The number of dispensaries maintained or aided by Boards was 124 or one less than in the previous year. The total expenditure on medical and sanitation exclusive of water-supply, rose from Rs. 2,78,221 to Rs. 2,83,862. Lady doctors and midwives were employed by most of the Boards, with assistance from the Countess of Dufferin's Fund and from municipal funds and other sources.

(c) Water-supply.

110. The expenditure on water-supply fell from Rs. 2,00,994 to Rs. 1,17,223, the decrease being due to the unavoidable postponement of the Government contribution for the third year's work of the five-year water-supply scheme which was undertaken in 1915-16. Most of the Boards practically completed the first and second years' programmes and some made a start on the third year's programme.

(d) Public Works.

111. The total expenditure on Public Works including water-supply fell from Rs. 8,81,033 to Rs. 7,94,314, the reason for the reduction being that stated in the preceding paragraph.

(e) Veterinary.

112. The total veterinary charges fell from Rs. 28,835 to Rs. 24,571. All but one of the Boards employed either one or two Veterinary Assistants each.

(f) Industrial development.

113. The carpentry and weaving classes maintained by the Dhubri Local Board at one of its schools worked satisfactorily. The Goalpara Board utilized as a teacher a local blacksmith who invented a hand-machine for spinning *eri* yarn from carded *eri* cocoons. Two weaving demonstrators were employed by the Gauhati Board, and the Sibsagar Board spent a sum of Rs. 502 in teaching carpentry and cane and bamboo work at a local industrial institution.

(g) Village Authorities.

114. Sixty-four Village Authorities worked during the year, thirty-three being under the Gauhati Local Board, thirty under Jorhat and the remaining one under Sunamganj. They were composed of 310 members the bulk of whom were elected by the villagers.

All the Chairmen were non-officials, 48 being elected and 16 nominated.

The total amount spent by the institutions in cash was Rs. 6,202, the greater part of which was subscribed by the villagers. The cash expenditure, however, represents only a portion of the activity of these bodies, since work is very often done by the villagers themselves, and when coolies are engaged their food is supplied by the villagers in lieu of cash payment.

The thirty-three Village Authorities under the Gauhati Board constructed over 20 new roads and paths and repaired $23\frac{1}{2}$ miles of old ones. They also dug 24 new tanks and restored 11. The institutions under the Jorhat Board also did good work in regard to road-making, and excavated 4 new tanks and repaired 14 old ones. Two business houses were constructed and a few school buildings repaired.

In addition to such work the Village Authorities were usefully engaged in settling disputes, in safeguarding grazing grounds, fuel reserves and road-side trees and in preventing the pollution of the water-supplies and the destruction of paths and bridges.

SECTION 10.—MILITARY (INDIAN DEFENCE FORCE).

MILITARY (INDIAN DEFENCE FORCE).

Military (Indian Defence Force).

115. The undermentioned Indian Defence Force Units were in existence during 1917-18 :—

1. 2nd Surma Valley Light Horse.
2. 6th Assam Valley Light Horse.

The total number of members of these units was—

	On 1st April 1917.	On 1st April 1918.
Officers	86	75
Rank and file	1,227	931

The number on 1st April 1918, was made up as follows :—

Units.	Officers (including staff and supernumerary officers).	Rank and file.	Reservists.	
			Officers.	Rank and file.
1	2	3	4	5
2nd Surma Valley Light Horse.	21	189	9	138
6th Assam Valley Light Horse.	35	330	10	274
Total ...	56	519	19	412

The decrease in the strength as compared with that of last year is due partly to former volunteers having been excluded from the operation of the Indian Defence Force Act, 1917, by reason of their age or ill-health, and partly to the exclusion from the numbers of officers and men who had joined the army.

The number of members of the Indian Defence Units who joined the Indian Army Reserve of Officers during 1917-18 is noted below :—

Units.	Number joined.	Remarks.
1	2	3
2nd Surma Valley Light Horse ...	19	.....
6th Assam Valley Light Horse ...	15	.....
Total	34	.....

CHAPTER IV.

Chap. IV. PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

SECTION I.—AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE.

[*See* Report of the Agriculture Department, Assam, for the year ending 30th June 1918.]

Staff.

116. The staff employed consisted of 1 Deputy Director, 1 Agricultural Chemist who performed the duties of a Deputy Director in addition to his own, 2 Agricultural Superintendents, 9 Agricultural Inspectors and Instructors, 3 Farm Managers and an Assistant Manager, an entomological assistant, 20 demonstrators, and 17 apprentices. The agricultural laboratory at Jorhat was completed and equipped, and the Chemist has been relieved of all other duties except the superintendence of the Jorhat and Kamrup farms.

The work of the Department consists chiefly in the maintenance of five farms, the demonstration in villages of agricultural methods, and the supply of improved seed and agricultural requirements to the public.

Farms.

117. The Jorhat farm deals mostly in soil investigation, manure tests, and the selection of improved sugarcane. Some useful results were obtained, and there was a great demand for setts of the selected canes. Altogether nearly half a million setts were supplied from the Jorhat and Kamrup farms.

The Kamrup farm is intended to demonstrate the possibility of growing sugarcane on a commercial scale with steam tackle. It was in its fourth year and of 817 acres reclaimed 593 acres were under cane. The outturn and quality of the cane were satisfactory, all things considered, but unfortunately the sugar factory was not ready in time, and but a minute fraction of the crop was converted into sugar. This caused heavy loss for which the farm was in no way responsible. The experiment is being continued.

The Shillong farm deals with potatoes and produced 58 tons, of which some 32 tons were supplied for seed. The average yield per acre was 3·2 tons. Fodder crops were grown also, maize and job's tears being converted into ensilage and "raishan" into hay. On the fruit farm at Shillong under Mr. Holder's management 24¾ acres have been planted. The trees are coming into bearing and Rs. 900 were realised by the sale of fruit locally.

The Karimganj farm is devoted to the pure line breeding of rice and to minor experiments with jute and *rabi* crops. The investigations require time and were interrupted by the floods of 1915 and 1916, so that no very definite results were attained.

Demonstrations.

118. Demonstrations were concerned chiefly with trials of different manures for, and different varieties of, rice and sugarcane; the introduction of improved varieties of jute, potatoes, and fodder crops; and tests of 3 cane roller mills and the Meston plough. Demonstrations in Sibsagar with bonemeal and flour phosphate as manures for paldy gave an average increase in the second year of 102 and 150 lbs. of grain, respectively. In the Khasi Hills there is now a considerable demand for bonemeal for the wet-land paddy. Shillong seed potatoes gave a markedly better outturn than the local seed: the difference ranging from 870 lbs. per acre in Sylhet to 2·3 tons in Sibsagar. The Finlow variety of jute gave good results in Sylhet and Kamrup and arrangements have been made to get a larger supply of seed.

Seed depôts.

119. The demand for all classes of seed is growing and since the close of the year a second seed depôt has been opened, and revised financial arrangements made so that the depôts will be able to supply seed on payment irrespective of budget limits.

Terrace cultivation.

120. In the Naga Hills and Lushai Hills efforts to extend terrace cultivation were continued; and potatoes and oranges are being introduced.

Water hyacinth.

121. The rapid advance of the water hyacinth into the rivers and *haors* of the Surma Valley first attracted attention. A pamphlet was issued pointing out the steps to be taken to prevent its spread, and the Agricultural Department manufactured 100 maunds of ash from the plant. The spread is still unchecked and energetic measures are necessary.

Flax.

122. Flax was grown successfully on the Kamalpur Estate in Kamrup, and the Local Administration has now been approached with proposals for the settlement of a considerable area of land for flax cultivation.

Live stock.

123. The breeding of cattle at the Upper Shillong farm was continued, and four young bulls and two heifers of the farm stock were sold to the public and one bull was sent to the Karimganj farm. The steps to be taken for the improvement of cattle in Assam were considered carefully by the Local Administration, and it has been decided that all that can be attempted at present is to import suitable sires from the Bengal cattle farm, and to form local committees of persons interested in cattle-breeding to promote selective breeding, better feeding and better treatment.

SECTION 2.—Co-operative Societies.

[*See* Report on the working of Co-operative Societies in Assam for the year ending the 31st March 19.8 ; Statistics of British India, Part II.]

Strength.

124. The number of co-operative societies rose during the year from 344 to 352, and the working capital from Rs. 10,59,308 to Rs. 10,92,445, whilst the number of members decreased from 19,700 to 19,183. There was no change in the number of central banks, unions and agricultural societies, but the number of non-agricultural societies rose from 19 to 27.

Central banks and unions.

125. The working capital of central banks increased from Rs. 3,76,866 to Rs. 3,90,104, and the paid-up share capital from Rs. 55,048 to Rs. 59,828. The profits of the banks amounted to Rs. 12,520. These banks issue loans to agricultural societies at rates of interest varying from 7½ per cent. to 9 per cent. per annum. The amount issued during the year was Rs. 77,474 against Rs. 67,300 in the previous year.

Agricultural societies.

126. The total working capital of agricultural societies fell from Rs. 4,65,945 to Rs. 4,59,774 and members' deposits from Rs. 99,264 to Rs. 81,084. The decrease is reported to be due to the abnormal price of the necessaries of life. The rate of interest on deposits remained the same as in the previous year, *i.e.*, 6¼ per cent. Loans to the value of Rs. 1,03,570 were issued. All profits of agricultural societies, amounting to Rs. 28,438, were carried to reserve funds.

Non-agricultural societies.

127. The total capital inclusive of reserve funds advanced during the year from Rs. 2,16,497 to Rs. 2,42,567. Deposits of members rose from Rs. 74,738 to Rs. 86,953 and those of non-members from Rs. 60,922 to Rs. 64,380. The societies issued Rs. 96,621 in 530 loans to their members, the average amount of loan per member being Rs. 42-8-0. There was no change in the rate of interest paid on deposits or of that charged on loans.

Reserve funds.

128. The reserve funds of central banks increased from Rs. 16,606 to Rs. 19,316, and those of agricultural and non-agricultural societies from Rs. 85,306 to Rs. 1,04,007 and from Rs. 16,239 to Rs. 19,166, respectively.

Other forms of co-operation.

129. Four new societies for the supply of weaving materials were registered in the Assam Valley Division towards the end of the year. The weavers' societies in the Sylhet district did well and would have done better had not the price of yarn been so high. An interesting experiment was made in the formation of a co-operative store amongst the labour force of a tea garden in the Jorhat subdivision.

General.

130. It was realised some years ago that the arrangement by which the control of co-operative societies is combined under a single officer with that of the Excise, Registration, and a number of other departments, was unsatisfactory, and as long ago as 1915 the appointment of a new officer as Registrar of Co-operative Societies and Director of Industries received the sanction of the Secretary of State. Financial restrictions consequent on the war rendered it impossible to provide funds either for the new appointment or for such increase of the subordinate staff of the department as would enable it to supervise efficiently any large expansion of the movement. During the year under review therefore such progress as was made was rather in the way of consolidation and of weeding out bad societies than in the creation of new societies. Funds have been found since the close of the year for the new head of the department, and it is hoped that a more forward policy will now be practicable.

SECTION 3.—Weather and Crops.

[*See* Report on the season and crops of Assam for the year ending 31st March 1918.; Agricultural Statistics of British India, Volume I, Appendix A.]

Weather.

131. The rain in spring was much lighter than usual, except in Lakhimpur and the eastern hill districts ; in June it was heavy and for the remaining months of the rainy season below the normal : it was heavy again in the autumn : and very scanty in the winter.

Crops.

132. The net effect was that the season was most favourable for winter rice. Floods in June did a good deal of damage to the jute crop in Goalpara. Autumn rice also suffered to some extent in that district and Sibsagar. Oilseeds and spring rice suffered from want of winter rain. Rice is the most important crops grown in the province. The return showed an increase of some 120,000 acres in the area under it, making the total 4,802,794 acres or about $\frac{4}{5}$ths of the whole cropped area in the province. About 3,418,000 acres are under winter rice, 961,000 acres under autumn rice, and 250,000 acres, all in Sylhet, under spring rice.

Outturn and prices.

133. Jute was grown on 100,324 acres; and cotton on 34,091 acres; showing extension in both cases. Oilseeds occupied about 2,78,000 acres, and sugarcane 34,509 acres.

The outturn per acre of winter, autumn, and spring rice was estimated at 111, 90 and 80 per cent., respectively, of the normal. The Provincial outturn of rice on the basis of these estimates amounted to 1,584,924 tons, an increase of some 380,880 tons over the preceding year.

The mustard and rape were poor and the yield is estimated at 47,092 tons. Jute too was below the normal and produced only 248,421 bales. The outturn of sugarcane was nearly normal and on the reported area came to 30,586 tons.

General.

134. The mortality from outbreaks of cattle disease was shown as about double that of the preceding year. The figures are not reliable, but there was a serious epidemic of rinderpest in Goalpara. On the whole the year was favourable to the cultivators but the abundant harvest brought the concomitant evil of low money values, which reduced the purchasing power of the people at a time when the prices of necessaries such as cloth and salt were inflated.

SECTION 4.—FORESTS.

[*See* Progress Report of Forest Administration in the Province of Assam for the year 1917-18 and Statistics of British India, Part IV (*b*), Finance and Revenue.]

Area and settlement.

135. The total area of forests in the province at the close of the year was 22,031 square miles, of which 5,381 square miles were reserved forests. Four hundred seventy square miles (110 square miles in the Western Circle and 360 square miles in Eastern Circle) were finally gazetted as reserved forests during the year and 329 square miles were undergoing settlement. The principal additions to the reserves in the Western Circle were made in the districts of Sylhet, Cachar, the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and Kamrup, and in the Eastern Circle in Nowgong, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur. Seven hundred and sixty acres from the Inner Line reserve in Cachar and the Narpuh reserve in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills were disforested.

A number of blocks of suitable jungle in the vicinity of villages in the Sibsagar district were selected for the formation of village forests under the Assam Forest Regulation, under the management of local committees.

Working plans.

136. No working plans were prepared during the year. The prescriptions of existing working plans could not be carried out in full on account of the absence of a large proportion of the superior staff of the department on military service and the general depression in the timber trade.

In the Western Circle a number of boundary surveys were made by local forest officers in the districts of Cachar, Sylhet and Goalpara, while in the Eastern Circle 51 square miles of boundary survey and 185 square miles of survey with interior details were made by the Survey Department.

Communication and buildings.

137. The Goalpara tramway continued to work at a profit, but owing to the small demand for timber the locomotive was only running for 111 working days. Its principal work consisted of the railing of 32,082 cubic feet of timber extracted from Bhutan by traders.

Expenditure on roads and buildings was kept down only really urgent work being undertaken during the year. Ninety-four miles of new roads and paths were constructed at a cost of Rs. 15,684 and a sum of Rs. 6,927 was spent on the construction of new rest-houses and subordinates' quarters. The expenditure on repairs to roads and buildings was Rs. 12,670 and Rs. 18,483, respectively.

Forest Offences.

138. The number of forest offences reported during the year decreased from 1,021 to 987, of which 301 cases were taken into Court against 366 in the previous year. There were 273 convictions and 52 acquittals.

Sylviculture.

139. Experiments were continued in burning the undergrowth in *sál* forests in the interests of regeneration and were attended with some degree of success in the higher

and drier localities where the undergrowth burnt freely. The experiments in raising a crop of *sál* in conjunction with *jhuming* failed generally owing to want of supervision, but gave promising results in one range in the Garo Hills, where supervision was adequate. *Simul* plantation was extended in the Eastern Circle and larger areas of *jhums* were sown with *simul* in the North-East Frontier Tract. The growth in the plantations was very satisfactory. The condition of the rubber plantations at Charduar and Kulsi remained unchanged. Some rubber was extracted from the former by free labour of forest villagers. The low price of Assam rubber precludes tapping except with free labour.

Financial results.

140. Despite war conditions the financial position of the Department was satisfactory. The gross revenue rose from Rs. 11,56,828 to Rs. 13,99,147 and the surplus from Rs. 4,76,525 to Rs. 7,52,270. The increase in receipts was mainly due to an increase demand for railway sleepers and for tea-box timber, and to the enhancement of the grazing fees.

General.

141. Six new forest villages were established in the Western Circle.

Elephant-catching operations were undertaken in five forest divisions and over 500 elephants were captured, yielding a revenue of Rs. 1,05,450.

An area of 190 square miles of grass lands has been proposed for reservation under the Assam Forest Regulation, with a view to the grant of leases for the manufacture of paper pulp.

SECTION 5.—MANUFACTURES AND MINES.

[*See* Statistical Abstract for British India, Volume I, Commercial.]

Tea.

142. The number of tea gardens increased from 786 to 796 and the acreage under tea from 389,338 acres (revised) to 399,690 acres. About 94 per cent. of the area under tea was plucked and yielded 243,127,292 lbs. of black tea and 521,414 lbs. of green against 242,022,786 lbs. and 161,785 lbs., respectively, in the previous year. Green tea was manufactured in Cachar and Sylhet and was generally made on contract only. The permanent and temporary labour forces increased by 9,965 and 1,218 persons, respectively.

Weather.

143. The weather was on the whole favourable to the growth of tea, though in some districts it was not good in the early part of the season. The total rainfall of the year was below the average in the Surma Valley, while it was a little in excess in the other valley except in Goalpara and Sibsagar.

Prices.

144. The average Calcutta prices for both the valleys were appreciably lower than those of the previous year.

In spite of the continued fall of prices and the difficulties in shipping to, and obtaining necessary stores and machinery from, England on account of the war the general prospects of the industry were good as indicated by the opening of new gardens and the extension of cultivation in existing gardens.

Minerals.

145. The revenue from minerals is derived mainly from the district of Lakhimpur in the Brahmaputra Valley. The receipts from coal and oil rose from Rs. 1,16,657 to Rs. 2,68,946, an increase of Rs. 1,52,289. The increase was due to the levy of duty on motor spirit in the district of Lakhimpur. In the Naga Hills the Nazira Coal Company worked the Barjan coal-mine and extracted 8,876 tons of coal, the value of the total output at the pit's mouth being Rs. 71,009.

Several applications for licenses to prospect for oil in the Cachar district were dealt with, but generally the exploitation of coal and oil was impeded by war conditions. Corundum was extracted in the Khasi Hills and was utilised for munitions works in England and America.

SECTION 6.—FACTORIES.

[*See* Statistical Abstract for British India, Volume I, Commercial.]

146. There were fifteen factories at work in the province during the year, classified as follows:—

Factories.	Districts.	Number.
Printing press ...	Khasi and Jaintia Hills ...	1
Railway workshops ...	Sibsagar, Nowgong and Lakhimpur	3
Colliery workshop ...	Lakhimpur	1
Petroleum refinery ...	Lakhimpur	1
Pottery ...	Lakhimpur	1
Saw-mills ...	Cachar, Sibsagar, Sylhet and Lakhimpur (5).	8
	Total	15

One saw-mill was established during the year in the district of Lakhimpur.

The total average daily number of operatives employed in the province increased from 2,968 to 3,337. Of these 2,486 were adult males, 560 adult females and 291 children. None of the factories in the province was inspected during the year and no prosecutions were instituted. The number of accidents was four, one being fatal, one classified as serious and two as minor.

SECTION 7.—Maritime Trade.

Nil.

SECTION 8.—Rail and River-borne Trade.

General.

147. Climatic conditions during the year under report were on the whole favourable to cultivation. The total rainfall was adequate in the Brahmaputra Valley, while in the rest of the province it was slightly deficient. Heavy rains and consequent floods in June did considerable damage to the jute crop in Goalpara, the principal jute-growing district. The provincial outturn of jute was lower, while that of rice, sugar-cane, and tea was higher, than that of the previous year; the outturn of oilseeds remained about the same.

Imports decreased in quantity from 10,457,233 maunds to 9,843,694 maunds, but their value increased from Rs. 9,42,72,013 to Rs. 9,57,88,861. Exports increased in quantity from 9,961,748 to 12,822,913 maunds and in value from Rs. 11,89,04,958 to Rs. 14,65,54,977.

The total trade of Assam increased in quantity from 20,418,982 to 22,666,607 maunds, and in value from Rs. 21,31,76,971 to Rs. 24,23,43,838.

Imports.

148. The principal imports were manufactured cotton, grain, pulse, iron and steel. Although imports fell in quantity the total value of cotton piece-goods of foreign manufacture imported from Calcutta increased by more than Rs. 44 lakhs, and those of foreign twist and yarn by Rs. 7 lakhs, owing to enhanced prices.

The import of rice, grain, pulse, kerosine oil and manufactured wood showed a falling off, while there was an expansion of the import trade in coal, mustard oil, betelnuts and tobacco.

Exports.

149. The most important article of export is tea, its value representing 70·6 per cent. of the total value of exports by rail and river. The quantity exported increased from 2,405,538 maunds in 1916-17 to 2,723,458 maunds in 1917-18. The export of paddy expanded from 1,811,215 to 2,865,268 maunds owing mainly to the good harvest of winter rice in the Surma Valley.

The export trade in mustard seed, kerosine oil, rice in the husk, raw cotton and timber expanded, while that in jute declined.

SECTION 9.—Frontier Trade.

Registration.

150. The following changes were effected during the year in the system of registration :—

(*a*) The trade with Bhutan from January to March was separately registered at Tambulpur and included in the returns, as it was found to be independent of the trade *viâ* Darranga.

(*b*) Traffic to and from Saikhowaghat on the Dibru-Sadiya Railway was incorporated in the frontier trade with the Abor and Mishmi hills.

Trade.

151. The total value of frontier trade increased from Rs. 20,28,738 to Rs. 33,34,867, the total value of imports being Rs. 16,79,915 against Rs. 10,95,124 and that of exports Rs. 16,54,952 against Rs. 9,33,614 in the preceding year. Amongst imports the most important items were woollen piece-goods, blankets, spices, ponies and cattle, hides and skins, musk and drugs, and amongst exports manufactured and raw silk, cotton piece-goods and yarn, husked rice and dried fish.

Bhutan.

152. Imports and exports rose from Rs. 9,65,830 and Rs. 8,74,904 to Rs. 13,79,665 and Rs. 12,70,625, respectively. The increase is due chiefly to the inclusion of the trade registered at Tambulpur referred to above which was omitted in the two previous years as being of doubtful correctness.

Towang and Charduar Bhutias.

153. The import trade expanded from Rs. 27,736 to Rs. 29,490 and the export from Rs. 23,129 to Rs. 34,624.

154. The import and export trade rose from Rs. 8,294 to Rs. 10,423 and from Rs. 7,098 to Rs. 9,993, respectively. Imports of madder amounted to Rs. 9,905 as against Rs. 4,511 in the previous year.

Aka and Dafla tribes. Abors, Mishmis, etc.

155. The import trade rose from Rs. 93,264 to Rs. 2,60,337 and the export from Rs. 28,483 to Rs. 3,39,710, the increase being due to the inclusion of rail traffic *viâ* Saikhowaghat as explained above.

General.

156. No taxes are known to have been levied by any foreign tribe on goods crossing the British frontier, but a toll of ten *per centum* is levied on all produce of the Abor, Mishmi, etc., hills auctioned in the Sadiya Bazar. The Conservator of Forests levied an *ad valorem* duty of Rs. 455 on tusks imported from Bhutan.

SECTION 10.—PUBLIC WORKS.

IMPERIAL WORKS.

157. No military work of importance was carried out during the year. The combined Post and Telegraph office at Jorhat which was in progress at the close of the last year was completed during the year under report.

PROVINCIAL WORKS.

Buildings.

158. Three residences were constructed and one purchased. The electric installation for Government House, the High School building at Golaghat, the Central Jail at Jorhat, certain improvements to the Tezpur and Sylhet Jails and the Lunatic Asylum at Tezpur, and the cholera hospital at Dhubri were completed during the year.

159. A sum of Rs. 2,75,286 was spent on original works.

Communications.

A sum of Rs. 1,10,277 was spent during the year mostly on the reconstruction of bridges on the Dimapur-Manipur road as a result of the floods of 1916-17, and a sum of Rs. 1,24,118 was spent on the construction of cart roads, of which Rs. 12,249 was expended on a cart road 9 miles in length from the 38th mile of the Assam Trunk road to Hahim to facilitate the extraction of corundum for munition purposes.

Motor Service.

160. The Gauhati-Shillong Motor Transport Company, Limited, continued to run the goods and passenger services on the Gauhati-Shillong road and to carry the mails in connection with the Assam-Bengal and Eastern Bengal Railway at Gauhati and Pandughat. During the year under report the Company were able to add to their fleet only 3 cars and 1 lorry.

Miscellaneous Public Improvements.

161. Four hundred and twenty miles of metalled roads, 1,437 miles of unmetalled roads and 2,180 miles of bridle roads were maintained during the year.

The scheme for the protection from fire of Government buildings in Shillong was completed during the year at a total cost of Rs. 25,611.

Contribution works.

162. The King Edward the VII Memorial Pasteur Institute at Shillong and the Director's quarters were completed during the year under report.

CHAPTER V.

REVENUE AND FINANCE.

A—GROSS REVENUE.

163. The receipts and charges of the province are shown below :—

Receipt during 1917-18.

Heads of Accounts.	Imperial.	Provincial.	Total.
1	2	3	4
A.—Principal Heads of Revenue ...	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
I.—Land Revenue	40,42,870	40,80,301	81,22,671
II.—Opium	6,75,862	...	6,75,862
III.—Salt	837	...	837
IV.—Stamps	7,08,499	7,08,498	14 16,997
V.—Excise	...	53,73,805	53,73,805
VI.—Provincial Rates	...	17,577	17,577
VII.—Customs	1,86,791	...	1,86,791
VIII.—Income Tax	5,02,828	4,14,579	9,17,407
IX.—Forest	...	13,09,956	13,09,956
X.—Registration	...	95,737	95,737
XI.—Tributes from Native States ...	50,100	...	50,100
Total A.—Principal Heads of Revenue ...	6,67,287	1,20,00,453	1,81,67,740
B.—Interest			
XII.—Interest	...	1,24,488	1,24,488
D.—Receipts by Civil Departments ...			
XVIA.—Law and Justice—Courts of Law ...	...	1,26,793	1,26,793
XVIB.—Law and Justice—Jails ...	...	92,431	92,431
XVII.—Police	...	1,82,385	1,82,385
XVIII.—Ports and Pilotage	...	204	204
XIX.—Education	...	2,13,246	2,13,246
XXA.—Medical	...	13,338	13,338
XXB.—Sanitation	...	33,968	33,968
XXIA.—Agriculture	...	38,778	38,778
XXIB.—Scientific and Miscellaneous Departments	...	9,245	9,245
Total D.—Receipts by Civil Departments ...	...	7,10,388	7,10,388
E.—Miscellaneous Civil Receipts—			
XXII.—Receipts in aid of Superannuation ...	31,929	4,741	36,670
XXIII. Stationery and Printing ...	252	4,593	4,845
XXV.—Miscellaneous	3,517	21,832	25,349
Total E.—Miscellaneous Civil Receipts ...	35,698	31,166	66,864
H.—Railways—			
XXVI.—State Railways (Gross Receipts) ...	...	1,36,724	1,36,724
Deduct Working Expenses ...	...	1,23,412	1,23,412
Net Railway Receipts ...	...	13,312	13,312
J.—Irrigation—			
XXX.—Minor works and Navigation (P. W.)			
K.—Other Public Works—			
XXXI.—Civil Works—Civil	...	75,516	75,516
Ditto —Public Works ...	1,107	1,41,508	1,42,615
Total K.—Other Public Works ...	1,107	2,17,024	2,18,131
Military Receipts—			
XXXIV.—Military Works	6,451	...	6,451
Transfer between Imperial and Provincial ...	—18,43,724	+18,43,724	...
Grand Total	43,66,819	1,49,40,555	1,93,07,374

Expenditure during 1917-18.

Heads of account.	Imperial.	Provincial.	Total.
1	2	3	4
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
A.—Direct demands on the Revenue—			
1. Refunds and drawbacks	18,034	25,825	43,859
2. Assignments and Compensations ...	31,107	17,688	48,795
3. Land Revenue	...	15,93,202	15,93,202
5. Salt	844	...	844
6. Stamps	21,888	21,887	43,775
7. Excise	...	1,19,965	1,19,965
8. Provincial Rates	...	...	...
10. Income Tax	2,214	2,214	4,428
11. Forest	...	6,86,627	6,86,627
12. Registration	...	67,108	67,108
Total A.—Direct demands on the revenue	74,087	25,34,516	26,08,603
B.—Interest—			
13. Interest on ordinary debt ...	...	1,62,312	1,62,312
14. Interest on other obligations. { Civil ...	40,656	...	40,656
{ Public Works	...	...	...
Total B.—Interest	40,656	1,62,312	2,02,968
D.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments—			
18. General Administration	1,56,449	6,05,735	7,62,184
19A. Law and Justice—Courts of Law ...	...	10,44,450	10,44,450
19B. Law and Justice—Jails ...	...	3,33,764	3,33,764
20. Police	...	23,71,725	23,71,725
21. Ports and Pilotage	...	61,340	61,340
22. Education	...	15,04,416	15,04,416
23. Ecclesiastical	20,051	...	20,051
24A. Medical	...	5,44,054	5,44,054
24B. Sanitation	...	1,74,712	1,74,712
25. Political	...	5,32,736	5,32,736
26A. Agriculture	...	3,32,134	3,32,134
26B. Scientific and Miscellaneous Departments.	...	84,237	84,237
Total D.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments.	1,76,500	75,89,303	77,65,803

Expenditure during 1917-18.

Heads of account.	Imperial.	Provincial.	Total.
1	2	3	4
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
E.—Miscellaneous—			
27. Territorial and Political Pension ...	7,124	...	7,124
29. Superannuation allowances and Pension	359	3,22,739	3,23,098
30. Stationery and Printing	557	1,49,484	1,50,041
32. Miscellaneous	20,146	4,40,340	4,60,486
Total E.—Miscellaneous	28,186	9,12,563	9,40,749
33. Famine Relief	13,162	4,387	17,549
H.—Railway Revenue Accounts—			
40. Subsidized Companies	...	5,112	5,112
41. Miscellaneous Railway Expenditure ...	...	297	297
Total H.—Railways	...	5,409	5,409
J.—Irrigation—			
43. Minor Works and Navigation. { Civil ... / Public Works	... / ...	... / 30,333	... / 30,333
Total J.—Irrigation	...	30,333	30,333
K.—Other Public Works—			
44. Construction of Railways	...	—11,493	—11,493
45. Civil Works—Civil	...	2,24,198	2,24,198
Ditto Public Works ...	35,082	28,77,706	29,12,788
Total K—Other Public Works ...	35,082	30,90,411	31,25,493
L.—Military Works Services—			
47. Military Works ... { Ordinary ... / Special ...	34,801 / ...	... / ...	34,801 / ...
Total L.—Military Works Services ...	34,801	...	34,801
Grand total	4,02,474	1,43,29,234	1,47,31,708

Abstracts of Receipts and Expenditure during 1917-18.

Heads.	1916-17.			1917-18.			1917-18 compared with 1916-17.			
							Revenue.		Expenditure.	
	Receipts.	Expenditure.	Net receipts and net expenditure.	Receipts.	Expenditure.	Net receipts and net expenditure.	Increase.	Decrease.	Increase.	Decrease.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
I. Principal Heads of Revenue	1,72,26,516	26,52,440	+1,45,74,076	1,81,67,740	26,08,603	+1,55,59,137	9,41,224	...	...	43,837
II. Departmental Heads—										
Interest	58,893	1,54,299	—95,406	1,24,488	2,02,968	—78,480	65,595	...	48,669	...
Civil Departments ...	6,86,730	75,43,422	—68,56,692	7,10,388	77,65,803	—70,55,415	23,658	...	2,22,381	...
Miscellaneous	1,02,622	10,50,437	—9,47,815	66,864	9,40,749	—8,73,885	...	35,758	...	1,09,688
Famine Relief and Insurance ...	...	...	...	...	17,549	—17,549	...	...	17,549	...
Railway Revenue Accounts ...	1,65,389	1,06,767	+58,622	1,36,724	1,28,821	+7,903	...	28,665	22,054	...
Irrigation	72,004	52,073	+19,931	...	30,333	—30,333	...	72,004	...	21,740
Other Public Works ...	1,59,144	33,17,735	—31,28,591	2,18,131	31,25,493	—29,07,362	28,987	...	...	1,92,242
Military Works Services ...	4,258	44,193	—39,935	6,451	34,801	—28,350	2,193	...	...	9,392
Total Departmental Heads ...	12,79,040	1,22,68,926	—1,09,89,886	12,63,046	1,22,46,517	—1,09,83,471	...	15,994	...	22,409
Grand Total ...	1,85,05,556	1,49,21,366	+ 35,84,190	1,94,30,786	1,48,55,120	45,75,666	9,25,230	...	...	66,246

164. The expenditure of the year compares as follows with that of 1916-17, and with the budget estimate for 1917-18. 3.—Land Revenue.

Minor heads.	1917-18 compared with 1916-17.		1917-18 compared with the budget estimate.	
	Increase.	Decrease.	Excess.	Savings.
1	2	3	4	5
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Charges of District Administration ...	2,000	...	6,000	...
2. Management of Government Estates ...	...	...	...	...
3. Charges on account of Land Revenue Collections	...	3,000	...	25,000
4. Charges on Account of Fishery Collections ...	...	...	...	...
5. Survey and Settlement	...	44,000	...	57,000
6. Land Records	...	6,000	...	6,000
7. Allowances to District and Village Officers ...	...	...	...	...

The increase under charges of district administration was due to larger expenditure on law charges. The decrease under charges on account of land revenue collections was due to the failure of many mauzadars to pay the final *kist* of the current demand and that under survey and settlement was due to the settlement operations in Sylhet and Cachar having been completed earlier than was anticipated. The decrease under Land Records was due to smaller outlay on salary and travelling allowance of the Assistant to the Director of Land Records, and on rewards to mandals.

18.—General Administration.

165. The details by minor heads of the actuals and estimates under the head are shown below in round figures :—

Minor heads.	Actuals, 1916-17.	Budget, 1917-18.	Actuals, 1917-18.	Comparison with the actuals of 1916-17.	Comparison with the budget of 1917-18.
1	2	3	4	5	6
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Salary of Chief Commissioner	57,000	57,000	57,000	...	...
Sumptuary allowance of Chief Commissioner ...	6,000	6,000	6,000	...	...
Staff and household of Chief Commissioner ...	28,000	30,000	31,000	+3,000	+1,000
Expenditure from contract allowance	7,000	7,000	6,000	—1,000	—1,000
Tour expenses	12,000	22,000	14,000	+2,000	—8,000
Legislative Council	17,000	14,000	11,000	—6,000	—3,000
Civil Secretariat	2,08,000	2,10,000	2,12,000	+4,000	+2,000
Commissioners	1,40,000	1,43,000	1,43,000	+3,000	...
Civil offices of Account and Audit :—					
(*a*) Imperial	1,61,000	1,59,000	1,56,000	—5,000	—3,000
(*b*) Provincial	31,000	31,000	31,000	...	...
Inspector General of Registration, etc.	41,000	41,000	44,000	+3,000	+3,000
Director of Land Records and Agriculture	47,000	50,000	51,000	+4,000	+1,000
Total	7,55,000	7,70,000	7,62,000	+7,000	—8,000

The decline under " Legislative Council " was due to smaller outlay on travelling allowance of members, consequent on the reopening of the hill section of the Assam-Bengal Railway. The small increases under " Secretariat " and " Commissioners " occurred under the salary head. Smaller outlay on establishment, travelling allowance and contingencies accounts for the decrease under Civil Offices of Accounts and Audit (Imperial). Larger outlay on salaries was the reason for the increase both under " Inspector General of Registration," and " Director of Land Records."

B.—IMPERIAL REVENUE AND FINANCE.

SECTION 1.—Land Revenue.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1917-18.]

Land Revenue.

166. The total ordinary land revenue demand rose from Rs. 81,82,484 to Rs. 85,97,770 of which Rs. 77,05,787 or 89·63 per cent. were collected and Rs. 65,593 were remitted, leaving a net outstanding balance of Rs. 8,32,453 at the close of the year. The total demand on account of miscellaneous land revenue rose from Rs. 7,77,175 to Rs. 9,15,123, of which Rs. 8,72,115 were collected and Rs. 20,522 were remitted.

SECTION 2.—Sources of Revenue other than Land Revenue.

Salt.

167. The only salt warehouse in the province is situated at Ajmiriganj in the district of Sylhet. The quantity of salt imported during the year amounted to 12,700 maunds against 36,600 maunds in the previous year, and 16,26. maunds were cleared against 31,014 maunds in the year 1916-17.

The wholesale and retail prices ranged from Rs. 4-6-0 to Rs. 7-4-0 and from Rs. 5 to Rs. 10 per maund, the figures for the previous year being Rs. 4 and Rs. 5 per maund respectively. The net revenue fell from Rs. 45,360 to Rs. 14,439. Duty had been paid in the previous year on nearly one-third of the salt cleared during 1917-18, and consequently the decrease in revenue was proportionately greater than that in clearances.

Excise receipts and charges.

168. The excise revenue under all heads amounted to Rs. 53,71,664 against Rs. 55,39,243 in the preceding year, showing a decrease of 3·1 per cent. The decrease which occurred both in realisations from duty and in those from vend fees, but mainly in the former, is attributable to the depressing effects of the war combined with the restrictive measures introduced during previous years with a view to checking

consumption. Realisations amounted to 99·97 per cent. of the demand, the outstanding balance being Rs. 986.

The expenditure of the department, fell from Rs. 1,41,459 to Rs. 1,40,217, which represents 2·61 per cent. of the total receipts.

169. The consumption of country spirit decreased by 15,644 L. P. gallons, or 7·2 per cent. and receipts fell from Rs. 15,54,321 to Rs. 14,61,063 or by 6·3 per cent. Country spirit.

There was no change in the area in which the outstill system was in force, samples of the spirit manufactured at Jorhat were declared by the Customs and Excise Chemist, Calcutta, as in previous years, to be of excellent quality and free from any deleterious substance.

170. The total number of retail *ganja* licenses rose from 232 to 233. The fall in the consumption of *ganja* from 674 maunds 39 seers to 569 maunds 18 seers, which is shared by all districts in the province, was largely due to the enhancement of the retail price of the drug consequent on the high wholesale price charged at Naugaon. The total revenue fell from Rs. 8,25,841 to Rs. 7,29,255. *Ganja.*

171. Although there was a further decrease in the consumption of opium by 40 maunds 23 seers, the total revenue rose from Rs. 31,38,948 to Rs. 31,48,144 owing to keen competition for shops in certain districts, which resulted in an increase of Rs. 21,861 under license fees. Opium.

172. Further progress was made during the year with the policy of reducing the number of stills and enhancing the still fees in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, and the sale of *kiad pudka* within the Shillong town and a 5 mile radius was prohibited. The prevention of the spread of the opium habit in the North-East Frontier engaged attention, but elsewhere conditions were not such as to call for the introduction of further restrictive measures. Orders have been issued since the close of the year raising the cost price of opium to Rs. 13 per seer, and fixing the treasury price of the drug at a uniform rate of Rs. 50 per seer throughout the province, the minimum retail price per tola being raised to annas 12 in the plains districts of the province. General.

Deference was paid to the views of local bodies in excise matters, and particularly in regard to the number, sites and closure of vend shops.

The agreement which was concluded with the Bhutan Darbar, whereby all outstills were removed from a ten-mile zone on the frontier, has had a useful effect in reducing the smuggling of contraband liquor. The experimental arrangement with the Hill Tippera State, by which vend shops on either side of the border are restricted in number, is also reported to have worked satisfactorily.

173. Receipts under the Stamp and Court-fees Acts fell from Rs. 14,13,341 to Rs. 13,95,948, and charges from Rs. 39,117 to Rs. 34,542. A decrease under non-judicial stamps was counterbalanced to some extent by an increase under judicial stamps. The fall in revenue in the Assam Valley Districts is attributed to a decrease in the value of suits, and generally to war conditions. The number of stamp vendors decreased from 359 to 350, of whom 203 were in the Sylhet district, and the discount allowed to them fell from Rs. 28,301 to Rs. 24,855. Stamp prosecutions fell from five to two and the amount of fines imposed from Rs. 57 to Rs. 16. Applications made to the Collectors for probate and letters of administration were 53 in number against 61 in the previous year. Stamp.

174. Income-tax receipts rose from Rs. 6,77,360 to Rs. 8,29,996, or by 22·53 per cent. The increase is attributable partly to the prosperity of the tea industry, and partly to the assessment within the province of certain firms which had hitherto paid the tax in Calcutta. Income-tax.

The number of assessees and the final demand, excluding the tax on salaries of Government officials and on interest on securities, were 5,954 and Rs. 7,19,585 against 5,857 and Rs. 5,87,819, respectively, in the previous year.

175. SECTION 3.—PROVINCIAL FINANCE.

Year.	Opening balance.	Receipts.	Expenditure.	Closing balance.
1	2	3	4	5
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1916-17	19,97,779	1,45,57,270	1,44,84,836	21,20,213
1917-18	21,20,213	1,49,40,555	1,43,29,234	27,31,534

The budget estimate for 1917-18 provided for an opening balance of Rs. 18,24,000 receipts amounting to Rs. 1,53,92,000, expenditure amounting to Rs. 1,54,56,000 and a closing balance of Rs. 17,60,000.

Receipts.

176. Provincial receipts were worse than the budget by Rs. 4,51,000. The decline was due to the net assignment from Imperial Revenues being actually less by Rs. 4,93,000 than the budget estimate, owing to smaller outlay on the North-East Frontier.

Expenditure.

177. The expenditure was lower than the budget estimate by Rs. 11,27,000. This was mainly due to smaller outlay on public works, owing to curtailment of expenditure on works as far as possible, and to large savings in the provision for salaries of officers, many of whom were deputed to the Military Department after the budget was framed.

Assignments.

178. The opening balance of Rs. 21,20,213 included Rs. 8,73,000 in the shape of unspent balances of earmarked grants given by the Government of India for Education, Sanitation, Police and for the development of the province and also Rs. 5,50,000 representing the unspent balance of an assignment of Rs. 8,00,000 made for general purposes. Similarly, the closing balance included Rs. 9,86,000 on account of earmarked grants, besides the unspent balance of the grant of Rs. 8,00,000 for discretionary purposes.

SECTION 4.—Local Funds.

179. The following statements show the receipts and charges of the year of those Local Funds of which an account is submitted to Government.

A

Statement showing the income, expenditure and balances of Local Boards and District Funds in Assam during the year 1917-18.

Names of Local Boards and District Funds.	Opening balance.	Receipts.	Total.	Payments.	Closing balance.
1	2	3	4	5	6
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
Silchar	20,517 11 10	1,26,709 14 6	1,47,227 10 4	1,26,156 13 9	21,070 12 7
Hailakandi ...	24,397 15 0	63,602 12 3	88,000 11 3	58,766 15 7	29,233 11 8
Tezpur	30,185 4 4	1,10,891 15 1	1,41,077 3 5	1,01,954 7 7	39,122 11 10
Mangaldai ...	50,049 1 8	79,304 4 0	1,29,353 5 8	99,509 9 7	29,843 12 1
Dhubri	82,836 14 3	1,75,320 6 0	2,58,157 4 3	1,61,052 14 10	97,104 5 5
Goalpara	18,379 1 1	72,167 13 6	90,546 14 7	70,647 3 11	19,899 10 8
Gauhati	25,314 9 10	1,72,179 8 5	1,97,494 2 3	1,41,229 13 0	56,264 5 3
Barpeta	17,657 14 8	53,108 9 3	70,746 7 11	53,802 3 1	16,944 4 10
Dibrugarh ...	54,483 14 7*	1,29,017 7 3	1,83,501 5 10	1,34,020 7 2	49,480 14 8
North Lakhimpur ...	32,929 3 6	59,074 0 6	92,003 4 0	65,739 5 3	26,263 14 9
Nowgong	14,931 7 4	1,04,056 10 8	1,18,988 2 0	94,531 10 8	24,456 7 4
Sibsagar	30,338 4 7	1,05,101 1 6	135,439 6 1	1,11,910 13 5	23,528 8 8
Jorhat	40,165 5 6	1,13,676 2 4	1,53,841 7 10	1,11,224 3 4	42,617 4 6
Golaghat	26,223 0 5	74,450 3 8	1,00,673 4 1	79,099 9 10	21,573 10 3
North Sylhet ...	24,542 4 10	1,24,306 14 1	1,48,849 2 11	1,49,185 4 11	—336 2 0
Karimganj ...	17,237 6 10	1,19,877 6 11	1,37,114 13 9	1,24,112 4 2	13,002 9 7
Sunamganj ...	4,950 12 9	1,00,382 5 10	1,05,333 2 7	95,739 3 9	9,593 14 10
South Sylhet ...	6,413 10 2	1,15,100 3 3	1,21,513 13 5	115,322 4 6	6,191 8 11
Habiganj	17,938 0 8	1,27,434 13 9	1,45,372 14 5	1,37,435 2 10	7,937 11 7
Total ...	5,39,471 15 10	20,25,762 8 9	25,65,234 8 7	20,31,450 7 2	5,33,794 1 5
Garo Hills District Fund.	3,698 12 8	3,691 15 0	7,590 11 8	2,463 8 1	5,127 3 7

* Difference of Rs. 8-13 between the opening balance of this year and the closing balance of the previous year, is due to an adjustment made in this office accounts after the submission of the last annual report.

B

Statement showing the income, expenditure and balances of Municipalities and Unions in Assam during the year 1917-18.

Names of Municipalities.	Opening balances.	Receipts.	Total.	Payments.	Balances.
1	2	3	4	5	6
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
Silchar	15,980 9 2	38,426 12 10	54,407 6 0	45,529 0 8	8,878 5 4
Hailakandi... ...	2,970 9 10	6,727 4 0	9,697 13 10	4,484 2 0	5,213 11 10
Tezpur	38,591 7 5	42,388 12 1	80,980 3 6	75,558 11 0	5,421 8 6
Mangaldai	2,377 9 11	5,179 13 6	7,557 7 5	3,576 11 7	3,980 11 10
Dhubri	10,934 9 9	40,446 6 4	51,381 0 1	29,627 2 5	21,753 13 8
Goalpara	1,873 11 10	14,295 7 6	16,169 3 4	14,263 10 3	1,905 9 1
Gauhati	602 10 11	89,326 8 11	89,929 3 10	79,212 7 8	10,716 12 2
Barpeta	5,411 11 2	18,426 4 0	23,837 15 2	15,013 11 6	8,824 3 8
Shillong	6,166 7 2	92,039 14 4	98,206 5 6	88,527 3 5	9,679 2 1
Dibrugarh	3,346 10 0	54,705 10 0	58,052 4 0	56,914 5 3	1,137 14 9
North Lakhimpur ...	5,235 4 1	5,890 12 0	11,126 0 1	6,601 4 9	4,524 11 4
Nowgong	5,089 4 6	21,029 13 11	26,119 2 5	20,412 3 5	5,706 15 0
Jorhat	2,160 14 6	32,227 2 0	34,388 0 6	27,801 1 2	6,586 15 4
Golaghat	5,147 5 3	11,542 2 9	16,689 8 0	11,308 12 9	5,380 11 3
Sibsagar	6,443 7 1	19,636 10 10	26,080 1 11	22,604 13 6	3,475 4 5
Nazira	5,752 10 0	3,651 11 6	9,404 5 6	7,072 10 6	2,331 11 0
North Sylhet ...	13,132 8 4	1,33,638 10 4	1,46,771 2 8	1,13,359 7 6	33,411 11 2
Habiganj	4,993 0 3	15,845 11 10	20,838 12 1	16,752 5 8	4,086 6 5
Karimganj	3,054 1 6	12,189 5 2	15,243 6 8	14,528 13 9	714 8 11
Sunamganj... ...	6,516 3 5	10,445 4 8	16,961 8 1	11,455 6 2	5,506 1 11
Maulvi Bazar ...	1,693 1 2	5,957 9 6	7,650 10 8	6,776 15 11	873 10 9
Total ..	1,47,473 13 3	6,74,017 12 0	8,21,491 9 3	6,71,381 0 10	1,50,110 8 5

C

Statement showing the income, expenditure and balances of Town and Bazar Funds in Assam during the year 1917-18.

Names of Funds.	Opening balances.	Receipts.	Total.	Payments.	Closing balances.
1	2	3	4	5	6
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
Haflong Bazar Fund	2,844 11 1	8,488 12 6	11,333 7 7	6,943 8 7	4,389 15 0
Jowai Town Fund	432 4 0	1,315 3 2	1,747 7 2	1,051 10 0	695 13 2
Sadiya Local Fund	17,161 3 9	18,528 9 3	35,689 13 0	23,407 2 0	12,282 11 0
Imphal Town Fund	1,732 5 0	14,840 7 10	16,572 12 10	15,419 1 7	1,153 11 3
Total	22,170 7 10	43,173 0 9	65,343 8 7	46,821 6 2	18,522 2 5

D

Statement showing the income, expenditure and balance of Cantonment Funds, Chowkidari Reward Funds and Assam Williamson Education Fund during the year 1917-18.

Names of Funds.	Opening balances.	Receipts.	Total.	Payments.	Closing balances.
1	2	3	4	5	6
(a) CANTONMENT FUNDS.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
Shillong Cantonment Fund ...	3,474 7 0	15,822 7 3	19,296 14 3	14,678 15 5	4,617 14 10
Dibrugarh Cantonment Fund ...	1,131 13 1	1,882 4 6	3,014 1 7	2,544 4 10	469 12 9
Total	4,606 4 1	17,704 11 9	22,310 15 10	17,223 4 3	5,087 11 7
(b) DISTRICT CHOWKIDARI REWARD FUNDS.					
Cachar	851 5 9	1,186 7 3	2,037 13 0	1,000 0 0	1,037 13 0
Goalpara	11,609 4 4	888 15 0	12,498 3 4	425 0 0	12,073 3 4
Sylhet	11,290 12 3	5,077 15 0	16,368 11 3	4,293 0 0	12,075 11 3
Total	23,751 6 4	7,153 5 3	30,904 11 7	5,718 0 0	25,186 11 7
(c) ASSAM WILLIAMSON EDUCATION FUND.	2,136 5 1	4,514 2 10	6,650 7 11	2,810 15 6	3,839 8 5

SECTION 5.—Local Rates.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year 1917-18.]

Local Rates.

180. The demand, inclusive of arrears, rose from Rs. 9,43,750 to Rs. 9,95,784. An increase of Rs. 28,697 was obtained by the revision of the assessment on the permanently-settled estates and revenue-free grants in Goalpara. Over 87 per cent. of the demand was collected, leaving a net outstanding balance of Rs. 1,29,170.

SECTION 6.—Educational Cesses.

Nil.

SECTION 7.—Municipal Revenue.

181. The subject of municipal income and expenditure is discussed in Section 8, Chapter III of this report.

CHAPTER VI.

SECTION I.—VITAL STATISTICS.

General.

182. The provincial vital statistics are based on a population of 6,051,507 in the plains districts. Climatic conditions during the year under report were generally favourable, and the year was on the whole a healthy one. The death-rate per mille fell from 28·59 in the previous year to 27·09, whilst the birth-rate rose from 30·52 to 31·35. The death-rate was slightly below the quinquennial average, whilst the birth-rate, owing to the unfavourable conditions of the previous year in the Surma Valley, was lower than the average by 1·11. The excess of the birth-rate over the death-rate rose from 1·93 to 4·26 per mille.

In tea estates the birth-rate rose from 25·15 in 1916 to 31·10, while the death-rate fell from 30·96 to 30·41 per mille.

The ratio of mortality from the chief diseases was 15·78 from fever, 1·81 from cholera and 1·99 from dysentery and diarrhœa against averages of 14·56, 2·66 and 2·50 respectively, in the preceding ten years.

Registration.

183. There was no change in the agency for the collection and registration of vital statistics, but the efforts made to secure more accurate figures from tea gardens have met with some success.

Hill Districts.

184. Vital statistics recorded in hill districts are given in the following table :—

Districts.	Birth-rate.		Death-rate.	
	1916.	1917.	1916.	1917.
1	2	3	4	5
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	24·12	28·02	23·40	24·36
Naga Hills	18·73	16·77	33·11	19·60
Lushai Hills	41·68	40·76	29·86	31·75
Garo Hills	22·72	27·96	19·86	*21·11

SECTION 2.—IMMIGRATION AND LABOUR INSPECTION.

[*See* Resolution on Immigrant Labour in Assam for the year 1917-18.]

Immigration

185. The number of immigrants was the lowest recorded for many years. The decrease is ascribed to good crops in the recruiting districts and to the increased demand for labour in those districts for industries in connection with the war. Contributory causes were the raising of labour corps in some of the recruiting districts for military service, a larger supply than usual of local labour owing to economic conditions in Assam, and a general disposition on the part of managers to carry on without increasing the labour force more than was absolutely necessary in view of the probable difficulty of disposing of the crop. The health of the immigrants on transit was good.

Immigrant population.

186. At the close of the year the total strength of the labour force was 940,368, representing a decrease of 16,348 compared with the figures of the previous year. The number of labourers with unexpired Act VI contracts was 1,122, which represents only 0·2 per cent. of the total number of adult labourers. The recorded birth-rate was 26·8 per mille calculated on the total strength of the coolie population, and 94·3 per mille on the adult female population, the figures for the preceding year being 22·8 and 79·6, respectively. The death-rate per mille of the total labour force was lower than that of the previous year, being 23·2 against 26·0.

The number of complaints of fraudulent and irregular recruitment fell from 21 to 7 of which one only was found on investigation to be true.

Chap. VI-VITAL STATISTICS.

Five complaints of ill-treatment, four of which were found to be trivial or not proved, were instituted by coolies against their employers. There were during the year under report nine cases of riot or unlawful assembly and seven cases of assault including one pending from the previous year. Sixty-three persons were sentenced to imprisonment in these cases.

Act XIII of 1859 continued to be largely used. Agreements under this Act are largely executed by labourers whose contracts under Act VI of 1901 have expired, as well as by free labourers when they reach the gardens. The contracts are usually executed for 313 days, but in some cases the period extends to 939 days with corresponding increases in the amount of the advance paid. Prosecutions for breach of the agreements are rare.

The relations between planters and neighbouring villages are reported to have been generally good. At the close of the year time expired coolies held 2,45,610 acres of Government land as tenants and 34,059 acres of lands as sub-tenants, against 2,35,094 and 32,346 acres, respectively, in the preceding year. The area of Government land settled with managers on special and ordinary leases to enable them to provide their coolies with cultivation was 19,411 acres.

SECTION 3.—Charitable Dispensaries.

[*See* Annual Report on the working of the Dispensaries in Assam for the year 1917.

Dispensaries.

187. The year opened with 215 hospitals and dispensaries and closed with 210, of which 71 were supported by the State, 123 by local bodies and 16 by private persons, missions and railways. The reduction was due to the demand for medical officers for military duty and to the difficulty of replacing them. Nine civil assistant surgeons and nine sub-assistant surgeons were deputed to military duty during the year.

The number of patients treated fell from 1,627,949 in 1916 to 1,602,873 in 1917. The percentage of the population obtaining medical relief in the "State public," local fund and "private-aided" dispensaries was 21·02 against 21·16 in 1916.

The income at the disposal of dispensaries of these classes was Rs. 5,35,337, of which Rs. 2,01,532 or 37·66 per cent. were contributed by Government. The total expenditure during the year was Rs. 4,05,991 against Rs. 4,47,520 in 1916.

Leper Asylum.

188. There were 44 lepers in the leper asylum at Sylhet at the beginning of the year. Fifty three were admitted during the year, one was discharged relieved, 26 were discharged otherwise, 7 absconded and 12 died, leaving 51 at the close of the year. The total expenditure, excluding establishment charges, amounted to Rs. 4,324-7 against Rs. 3,957 in 1916.

In the Kohima leper hospital there were 18 lepers on the 1st January 1917. Ten were admitted during the year, 1 was discharged cured, 2 died and 3 were discharged otherwise, leaving 22 at the close of the year. Exclusive of establishment charges the total expenditure was Rs. 1,937 against Rs. 1,410 in 1916.

Two different methods of treatment of leprosy were followed at Sylhet, namely, those advocated by Dr. Heiser of the Phillipines and by Lieutenant Colonel Sir Leonard Rogers, I.M.S. Dr. Heiser's method of treatment was discontinued as it failed to give good results. The results obtained by following Sir Leonard Rogers' method are encouraging, but it is too early to say definitely that a real cure will be effected, or that the improvement obtained will be permanent.

SECTION 4.—Lunatic Asylum.

[*See* Triennial Report on the Lunatic Asylum in Assam for the years 1915, 1916 and 1917.]

Popu'ation.

189. The total number of lunatics under confinement was 459, of whom 145 were criminal lunatics. Sixty-four were discharged cured, 6 made over to their friends as improved, 13 were discharged otherwise and 19 died, leaving 357 at the close of the year. The districts of Sylhet, Lakhimpur and Kamrup furnished the largest numbers. The bulk of the patients came, as usual, from among cultivators and tea-garden coolies, and from persons between 20 and 40 years of age. Mania, which was the chief form of insanity, accounted for 36 admissions against 50 in 1916. Heredity (epileptic) was the most frequently reported "predisposing cause" of insanity. *Ganja* was returned as the "predisposing cause" in five cases, and as the "exciting cause" in 20. Alcohol figured as the "predisposing cause" in three, and opium in five, cases.

190. The number of admissions to hospital fell from 222 in 1916 to 122 in 1917 and the number of deaths from 52 to 19. The ratio of deaths per cent. of average strength amongst the inmates *viz.*, 5·56, was lower in Assam than in any other province in India. The improved health of the lunatics was mainly due to the provision of increased accommodation, the improvement of ventilation in existing barracks, and the close attention paid by the Superintendent to every detail connected with the health of the inmates. Health.

191. The cost of maintaining the asylum rose from Rs. 71,028-0-3 in 1916 to Rs. 73,121-4-6 and the average cost per head from Rs. 197-3-9 to Rs. 214-2-6. The principal cause of increase in expenditure was the increased cost of food grains, clothing and medicines. The profits in the manufactory department were Rs. 5,189-5-8 against Rs. 8,403-2-4 in 1916, the decrease being due to the stoppage of extra-mural work. Cost of maintenance.

SECTION 5.—SANITATION.

[*See* Annual Sanitary Report of the Province of Assam for 1917.]

192. The sale of quinine "treatments" showed an increase of 4,983 parcels over the figures of the previous year. Medical.

As a result of investigations carried out by the provincial Sanitary Department the Assam-Bengal Railway authorities have undertaken a scheme for stamping out the high degree of malaria infection existing at Lumding.

Although the total mortality from *kala-azar* was not in itself serious, the spread of the disease to areas in Upper Assam which have hitherto been immune from it caused much anxiety and received much attention during the year. Separate regulations, suited to ordinary villages and to tea gardens infected with the disease, were framed by a representative conference which met at Shillong in September 1917 and have been notified under the Epidemic Diseases Act (III of 1897). A detailed survey of the areas affected or likely to be affected has been undertaken, and arrangements have been made for the construction of an in-door hospital for the treatment of *kala-azar* patients by Sir Leonard Rogers' method.

SECTION 6.—VACCINATION.

[*See* Annual Vaccination Returns of the Province of Assam for the year 1917-18.]

193. The total number of vaccination operations performed by all agencies during the year was 354,323, which represents a decrease of 17,339 operations as compared with the figures of the previous year. The decrease was considerable in the districts of Cachar, Sylhet, the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, Sibsagar and the Garo Hills. The district of Cachar showed a high rate of mortality from small-pox. Operations.

During the year 53 per cent. of the infants available for vaccination in compulsory areas were successfully vaccinated, as compared with 56 per cent. in 1916-17.

The ratio was very low in all towns in the Surma Valley Division where the percentage varied from 25 to 55. Measures have been taken to effect an improvement in this respect.

The total cost of the Department, including that of the lymph prepared at the Shillong Vaccine Depôt, was Rs. 55,000-11-10, which gives an average cost of Re. 0-3-2 for each successful vaccination, against Rs. 52,636-11-9 and Re. 0-2-9, respectively, in the preceding year. The increase in the cost per successful operation was due to the reduction in the number of operations performed in Cachar, Sylhet and Sibsagar, and to an unusually large number of failures which occurred in October.

The number of vaccinators employed is in most districts insufficient, and the question of increasing their number is engaging attention.

SECTION 7.—BACTERIOLOGICAL AND PASTEUR VACCINE INSTITUTES.

[*See* the Annual Report on the Pasteur Institute for the year 1917.]

194. The Shillong Pasteur Institute was opened in January 1917. During the year 592 persons presented themselves for anti-rabic treatment and 569 patients—50 Europeans and 519 Indians—underwent the complete course of treatment. Of the European patients 9 came from Assam and 51 from Bengal. The patients came from every district in Assam, from 23 districts of Bengal, and from two of Bihar and Orissa. Out of the 519 Indian patients 252 were certified to be indigent and their Bacteriological and Pasteur Vaccine Institute.

expenses were borne by Government, 124 came at the expense of tea companies and 111 were Government servants entitled to concessions.

Five deaths, or 0·88 per cent. occurred from hydrophobia amongst the 569 patients treated.

Work in connection with cholera, typhoid fever, *kala-azar*, malaria, cerebro-spinal fever and diptheria was done in the bacteriological and research section of the institute. Out of 1071 specimens received for examination only 45 came from outside Shillong, and the fact that a bacteriological side of the institute exists, affording facilities for laboratory examinations to all medical men in the province, is hardly yet appreciated outside Shillong itself.

Classes of instruction were held in first aid, in tropical medicine and hygiene and in general bacteriology, and also a special class for the sub-assistant surgeons on *kala-azar* survey.

The cost of the maintenance of the institute during the year was Rs. 28,311.

CHAPTER VII.

INSTRUCTION.

SECTION 1.—General System of Public Instruction.

[*See* General Administration Report for 1911-12, Part II, pages 121-123.]

SECTION 2.—Education.

General.

195. The total number of public institutions has increased from 4,587 to 4,619 but their attendance declined from 224,819 to 221,469 or by 1·5 per cent. owing mainly to economic causes. The decrease occurred almost entirely in the lower classes of vernacular schools. In the upper classes of these schools and of anglo-vernacular schools there was a considerable increase and the provincial colleges were quite unable to meet the demands upon them.

Private institutions declined both in number and attendance.

The total expenditure on public institutions increased from Rs. 25,59,290 to Rs. 25,82,270. The income from fees continues to increase rapidly.

Collegiate education.

196. This branch of education continues to attract an increasing number of students yearly. The numbers at the close of the year were 811 against 688 in the previous year. The number of intermediate passed students rose from 140 to 158 and the number of graduates from 48 to 69. The Murarichand College building scheme remained at a standstill. The affiliation of the college was extended to include Arabic; there was no change in the affiliation of the Cotton College.

The University Commission took into consideration the question of the establishment of a separate University for Assam.

Secondary education.

197. Secondary schools for boys increased in number from 261 to 269. The number of high schools remained constant, namely 35, but their enrolment advanced from 13,382 to 13,406. Middle English schools increased from 113 to 116, the attendance declining from 11,183 to 11,089 due mainly to an error in the returns. Middle vernacular schools increased from 112 to 117 and by 2·4 per cent. in enrolment. The most satisfactory feature of the year compared with 1914-15 was that the number completing the middle vernacular course increased by 105 per cent. The numbers in the upper classes of all grades of institutions show a steady advance.

Primary education.

198. Primary schools for boys increased from 3,868 to 3,881 but their enrolment fell off by 2·3 per cent.

Expenditure decreased from Rs. 6,91,429 to Rs. 6,63,920. The capitation system was abolished during the year and funds were granted to local bodies to enable them to improve the pay and prospects of teachers on a system which it was hoped would operate more evenly in rewarding merit.

Training of teachers.

199. The number of training schools remained unchanged. Of 6,272 vernacular masters in the province 2,684 are returned as trained as against 2,547 out of 6,323 in the preceding year.

Law.

200. The Law College which is now in the fourth year of its experimental period had at the close of last year 55 students as against 45 in the preceding year. The examination results were good.

There were 15 students in the pleadership class at Gauhati.

Medical school.

201. There were, on 31st March 1918, 137 students on the rolls of the Berry-White Medical School against 149 in the preceding year. The enrolment consisted of 79 residents of the Brahmaputra Valley, 35 of the Surma Valley, six Khasis, four Lushais, two Garos, two Manipuris, one Naga, one Miri and seven Bengalis. Out of 34 students in the fourth-year class 19 or 56 per cent. passed the final examination. Of 41 free-studentships offered only 38 were taken up.

The compounder class attached to the school which had on its roll 54 students presented 40 at the final examination of whom 33 passed out qualified.

Technical.

202. Two Civil Engineering scholarships were awarded at Sibpur and six at the Dacca School of Engineering. The scheme for apprenticing Lushai youths in various crafts which was sanctioned for three years was extended for a year. The Tipkai Middle English and Industrial school for Meches has established itself so far as the Middle English and carpentry departments are concerned. The telegraph training class at Gauhati had an enrolment of 16. Under the Williamson Apprenticeship scheme, there were 15 apprentices on the rolls on 31st March 1918.

INSTRUCTION.

Tols.

203. The number of *tols* of all classes, public and private, increased from 83 to 85 and the number of pupils from 1,500 to 1,519. Sanskrit education in tols shows a tendency to advance both in the number of its pupils and the standard of its attainment.

Madrasas.

204. At the close of the year there were 10 public Madrasas with 870 pupils. The Government Madrasa at Sylhet which had an enrolment of 172 on 31st March last reached the full status of a Senior Madrasa. Rules of transfer to and from the Madrasa were codified and a programme with a view to gradual identification of the Madrasa year with the school year was framed.

Female education.

205. On 31st March 1918 there were 359 schools for girls for general education against 356 in the corresponding date of the previous year. The number of girls in public schools was 26,857 against 27,665 in the previous year showing a loss of 808 or approximately 3 per cent. The decline was in the number of girls in boys' schools. It has not been possible to start the proposed high school at Dibrugarh or to take in hand the much needed improvement of the various girls' schools at headquarters. Considerable capital grants were however given for the improvement of buildings and equipment.

European education.

206. The number of schools increased by one, a new school called St. Agnes Convent having been opened at Haflong towards the close of the year. The aggregate number of pupils enrolled in European schools was 222 against 228 in the previous year.

Muhammadan education.

207. The subjoined statement gives the Muhammadan enrolment for the past two years in the various classes of recognised schools :—

	1916-17.	1917-18.
High schools	2,409	2,354
Middle English schools	2,042	1,998
Middle Vernacular schools	2,271	2,168
Primary	44,236	42,441
Special schools	669	903

Economic causes are largely responsible for the general falling off.

The number of Muhammadans at college was 126 against 91 in the previous year.

In connection with the scheme in regard to Islamic teaching in all classes of schools, instruction according to the approved courses was proceeding at the close of the year in 6 High Schools, 40 Middle schools and 236 Primary schools.

Hill tribes.

208. All the hill districts with the exception of the Garo Hills return an advance in enrolment, the major reason for the decline in the Garo Hills being the general disorganisation towards the close of the year consequent on the illness and death of the Deputy Inspector of Schools

The recruitment of Labour Corps is also to some extent responsible

Tea-garden schools.

209. The number of tea-garden schools decreased from 149 to 142, the loss being in the C class schools.

Discipline.

210. Discipline in schools and colleges was not unsatisfactory.

SECTION 3.—LITERATURE AND THE PRESS.

Publication registered.

211. The tolal number of publications received and catalogued was 41 against 53 in the preceding year. They are classified as below according to the subjects dealt with :—

General text-books and keys	9
History...	1
Miscellaneous	13
Periodicals	11
Poetry	1
Religion	5
Law	1
Total	41

Of these, twelve were educational and twenty-nine non-educational, thirty-five were first editions and six new editions ; four were in Assamese, twenty in Bengali, two in English, three in Sanskrit, seven in Assamese-English, one in Assamese Miri, two in Bengali-Sanskrit, one in Manipuri-Bengali, and one in Nagri-Arabic.

212. Two English, one Anglo-Vernacular, and nine vernacular newspapers, and five periodicals were published during the year. The tone of the press continued to be unobjectionable. Newspaper.

SECTION 4.—Scientific and Literary Societies.

Nil.

SECTION 5.—Arts and Sciences.

Nil.

CHAPTER VIII.

ARCHÆOLOGY.

Archæology.

213. The most interesting of the monuments protected under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, VII of 1904, are the rock inscriptions at the foot of the Kamakhya Hill near Gauhati, the Dargah of Shah Jalal at Sylhet, the copper temple of the Deori Chutiyas near Sadiya where human sacrifices used to be offered annually, the Kachari ruins at Dimapur, the rock-cut temples at Maibong, the ruins of the Ahom palaces at Rangpur and Garhgaon, and the temples at Jaisagar and Gaurisagar in the Sibsagar district. The majority of these monuments are maintained by the Public Works Department.

The Rangamati mosque with the ablution tank attached thereto was declared to be a protected monument during the year.

Special repairs were carried out during the year by the Public Works Department to many of the protected monuments in Manipur.

A project for the construction of a museum at Gauhati, sanctioned by this Administration at an estimated cost of Rs. 37,443, awaits the allotment of funds.

CHAPTER IX.

MISCELLANEOUS.

SECTION 1.—ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION.

[See General Administration Report for 1911-12, Part II, page 128.]

SECTION 2.—ECCLESIASTICAL.

214. The ecclesiastical establishment of the province, maintained entirely or in part by this Administration, consists of the Chaplaincy of Shillong and the State-Aided Chaplaincies of Silchar, Darrang, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur. Ecclesiatical.

The Reverend W. H. Drawbridge, Chaplain of Shillong, was transferred to the Calcutta Diocese on the 19th November 1917, and was succeeded on the 5th December 1917 by the Revd. C. G. Stokoe, M.A., Senior Chaplain of St. Paul's Cathedral, Calcutta. During the interval the Right Revd. H. Pakenham-Walsh, Bishop in Assam, acted as Chaplain of Shillong. The Chaplaincies of Silchar and Sibsagar remained vacant during the year 1917-18.

SECTION 3.—STATIONERY.

215. The total allotment for stationery was Rs. 47,760. The value of the stationery consumed amounted to Rs. 41,654, including Rs. 10,534 for articles supplied to the Secretariat Press, against Rs. 45,039 in the previous year. The result was a decrease of Rs. 3,385 or over 7 per cent. in expenditure as compared with the preceding year. Strict economy is being enforced in regard to the use of articles of stationery generally. Stationery.

SECTION 4.—PRINTING.

216. Cash receipts of the Secretariat Press decreased from Rs. 3,148 to Rs. 2,926 owing chiefly to a reduction in the amount of printing work done for bodies financially independent of Government and other private customers; and to smaller sales of Acts and books, etc. Expenditure fell from Rs. 1,05,253 to Rs. 99,622 owing to a general reduction of work on account of the war. The actual amount paid to workmen exceeded the value of outturn by Rs. 1,562, the loss occurring entirely in the "press and machine" branch. Printing.

SECTION 5.—VETERINARY DEPARTMENT.

[*See* Report of the Civil Veterinary Department of Assam for 1917-18.]

217. The staff of the department was strengthened during the year by 4 new assistants and at the close of the year the staff available for local service consisted of 3 Inspectors and 36 assistants, of whom 28 were under Local Boards. Five Veterinary assistants were on deputation to military duty. Staff.

218. The number of deaths from contagious disease reported was 60,710 against 47,932 of the preceding year. The increase is attributable largely to improved reporting, but there was a quite exceptional epidemic of rinderpest in Goalpara, which was responsible for 14,294 deaths. The number of inoculations against rinderpest, anthrax, and hæmorrhagic septicæmia rose from 36,016 to 45,704, and among the 38,295 animals inoculated for rinderpest, only 346 or 9 per cent. died. There was a bad outbreak of surra among the mules bought for the operations against the Kukis: the whole batch of 49 either died of the disease or had to be destroyed. Cattle disease.

219. Two of the stud bulls were sold as unserviceable, leaving nine animals at the close of the year. The herd of cattle at the Upper Shillong Farm increased to 106 heads. Live stock.

220. The Veterinary hospitals at Silchar, Gauhati, and Shillong, maintained by Government treated 3,391 animals. Most Local Boards maintain Veterinary dispen- Infirmaries.

A. S. P. O. (F. & G.) No. 56—400—5-3-1919—O. M. B.

REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION OF ASSAM

FOR

1918-19.

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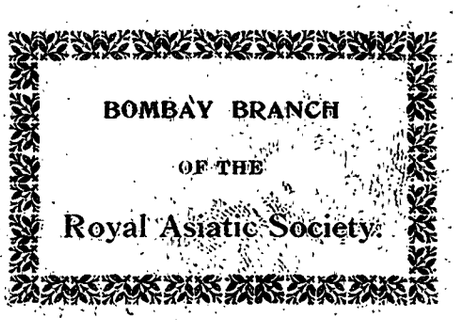
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REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION OF ASSAM

FOR

1918-19.

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PART I.

SUMMARY.

[Prescribed maximum length from 10 to 15 pages.]

PART I.

GENERAL SUMMARY.

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REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION OF ASSAM

FOR THE YEAR

1918-19.

PART I.—General Summary.

War and the Administration.

1. As the end of the Great War falls within the period covered by this Report, the Chief Commissioner takes this opportunity of putting on record an epitome of the contributions made by this province. From its cadre the Administration in all spared 174 officers for military duty. Of these, twenty-two were drawn from the Indian Civil Service, seventeen from the Public Works Department, fifteen from the Assam Rifles, eleven from the Indian Police, ten from the Imperial Forest Service, seven each from the Indian Medical Service and the Indian Medical Department, five from the military members of the Assam Commission, four each from the Indian Educational Service and the Provincial Civil Service, two each from the Survey Department and the Indian Finance Department, one each from the Indian Agricultural Service and the Provincial Educational Service, one was an Inspector of Police, fourteen were Civil Assistant Surgeons and fifty-one were Sub-Assistant Surgeons. The Chief Commissioner much regrets the loss of eight officers who fell in the service of their country—Major C. Bliss, Captain A. M. Graham, Major H. C. Nicolay, Captain G. D. Mathew, Captain H. St. G. J. Pulford, W. J. Arbuthnot, A. C. Hay and H. G. M. Vickers. The Administration is the poorer for their loss. Valuable service was also rendered to the Empire by the non-official members of the Assam Valley Light Horse and Surma Valley Light Horse, 168 of whom joined the Indian Army Reserve of Officers, and 79 the regular forces, while 31 served with labour corps. The Chief Commissioner regrets to record that 15 of their number were killed. Until the Kuki Operations engaged them, the Assam Rifles sent a steady stream of recruits to the Army. In all 3,232 officers and men were contributed. A double company of Assamese was formed and a double company of Manipuris, raised by His Highness the Maharaja of Manipur, saw service in Mesopotamia and was maintained by regular drafts. A few young men joined the Bengali Regiment and 239 recruits joined the Royal Artillery Depôt at Belgaum. Volunteers were put through a more rigorous training on the conversion of their two regiments, the Assam Valley and Surma Valley Light Horse, into Indian Defence Force units. Time and trouble were not grudged by the members of these Regiments, who, whether non-officials or officials, were practically all busy men carrying on their usual work short-handed or otherwise handicapped by war conditions. The principal recruiting area was the Assam Valley, where Captain D. P. Copeland, O.B.E., an *ex*-Forest Officer of wide experience in Assam, was particularly successful: he recruited as combatants 3,069 persons who were passed fit by the doctor, 200 for a mule corps and 100 for the Army Bearer Corps. Labour Corps, of a strength of approximately 2,000 men each, were raised in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, the Lushai Hills, the Naga Hills and in Manipur, respectively, and of 500 strong in the Garo Hills. These corps served in France. From Sylhet a Labour Corps about 1,000 strong was sent to Mesopotamia. Sylhet also provided a number of men as marine ratings and in all supplied about 2,600 combatant and non-combatant recruits. In 1918, as a sequel to the Delhi Conference, two Divisional War Committees, comprising the leading officials and non-officials, with the Commissioner as President were formed, one for either Valley, to superintend and promote recruiting, to conduct a war loan campaign, and to discharge the functions of Resources Committees, Publicity Boards and Employment Bureaux. The total amount subscribed by residents in Assam to Indian War Loans cannot be ascertained, as no separate account could be kept of subscriptions made in Calcutta and other places outside the province, but it is known that 25 lakhs of rupees worth were taken up in Assam. Similarly the statistics of the amounts given to war charities are incomplete, but they show that nearly nine lakhs were contributed. Donations for war purposes to the amount of Rs. 55,500 were received and there were sundry contributions of material, including an air-propelled boat and goods of the value of about Rs. 20,000 for the Red Cross Fund.

Political.

2. The province was not disturbed by political agitation. In the early part of the year considerable enthusiasm was displayed in the matter of recruitment both for combatant and non-combatant ranks, but the signing of the armistice with Germany intervened before the proposed local battalions could be raised. The armistice was celebrated throughout the province with noticeable fervour and enthusiasm. Economic conditions occasioned some anxiety owing to the rise in the price of rice, but the steps taken by Government to control the import and export of rice and other food-grains and the introduction of standard cloth alleviated the prevailing distress.

Year ending 31st March 1919.

Kuki rebellion.

3. During the cold weather of 1918-19 the Kuki rebellion was suppressed by the combined operations of the Assam Rifles and the Burma Military Police acting under the command of Lieutenant General Sir Henry Keary, K.C.B., K.C.I.E., D.S.O., Commanding the Burma Division, and measures were taken to secure permanent peace on this frontier of Assam. This rising was confined almost entirely to the Thado Kukis and to the Manhlumand Mangvum Kukis of south and south-eastern Manipur. It is estimated that the rebels numbered 40,000 persons scattered over some 6,000 square miles of rugged hills surrounding the Manipur Valley and extending to the Somra Tract and the Thaungdut State in Burma. The first outbreak occurred in April 1917, and the measures taken to restore order during 1917-18 met with no permanent success. During the rainy season of 1918 the Kukis raided and harried loyal tribesmen and interrupted traffic. It was, therefore, decided to take concerted action under military direction from both the Burma and Assam sides. Brigadier General Macquoid, D.S.O., took command of the operations in the Assam area. The rebels were systematically attacked, defeated and disarmed, and by April 1919 peace had been completely restored.

Relations with Tributary States and Frontier affairs.

In May 1918 Daflas of Miripathar raided the plains Dafla villages of Gaigaon and Barani pathar and carried off captives. Certain Mishmis, in revenge for the execution in 1918 of a man of their village, murdered a sepoy of the Assam Rifles at Nizamghat. In the Lushai Hills there was unrest in the neighbourhood of South Vonlaiphai, and on the southern border the chiefs in the unadministered area maintained their attitude of passive and sullen recalcitrance. With these exceptions, the hill tribes, both independent and administered, were well behaved.

Year ending 31st March 1919.

Crops and condition of the people.

4. On the whole, crops gave a smaller yield than usual and in the latter part of the year the prices of rice and other foodstuffs rose abnormally high. The benefit that the agricultural population might have expected to get from this rise in the value of their produce was offset by the increase in the cost of living brought about by the general inflation of prices and by poor crops. Steps were taken to prevent rice from leaving the province and to secure the free import of rice from Burma. Standard cloth was introduced and sold to the poor. The price of salt was regulated. In some parts of the Surma Valley, where there was distress, gratuitous relief was given to poor widows and infirm persons. There was much sickness. Influenza caused high mortality in almost every district, and cholera was prevalent. In the evening of the 8th July 1918 a severe earthquake damaged property in the district of Sylhet and killed fifty-three persons. The number of post office savings bank accounts opened increased from 16,459 to 18,617 and the amount deposited rose from Rs. 10,77,375 to Rs. 15,19,082.

Year ending 30th June 1919.

Assam Rifles.

5. For the Kuki operations twenty additional Assistant Commandants were appointed and of the four battalions of Assam Rifles 420 men from the first, 460 from the second, 800 from the third and all the fourth were employed. Casualties in these operations were 28 killed in action or died of wounds, 47 wounded and 84 died of disease contracted in the field. Assam Rifles furnished a guard for the North Cachar Hills and an escort for the Political Officer, Balipara Frontier Tract, for a dash into the Miripathar.

Year ending 31st December 1918.

Crime.

6. The number of cognisable cases reported, 18,014, was lower than any year since 1912 and some three thousand below the figures of 1917. This decrease in crime was attributed partly to economic causes, such as the influenza epidemic and the good rice crop of 1917-18, partly to police action in preventive measures and the prosecution of notorious gangs of thieves. The systematic patrolling of the waterways in Sylhet resulted in a marked decrease of crime in the area patrolled. As an outcome of resentment against shop-keepers on account of high prices, a number of markets and shops were looted, first in Goalpara in 1917 and later in Sylhet, Lakhimpur and other districts. In most cases little violence was used and peace was promptly restored. In all 214

Year ending 31st December 1918.

such cases were reported during the year, including 155 from Lakhimpur: 1,774 persons were brought to trial and 1,135 were convicted. In Kamrup five anarchists were arrested after armed resistance to the police. The Railway Police were successful in reducing the number of running train thefts and of "missing goods" cases.

Jails.

7. The total number of prisoners admitted to jail and the daily average number of prisoners of all classes increased slightly. The sick rate increased by 50 per cent. and the death-rate rose from 13·23 to 21·42 per mille. The death-rate was lower than that of any other province except Bengal, where the rate was 21·3. Proposals for improvement in the pay of warders were sanctioned.

Year ending 31st December 1918.

Municipalities.

8. There were fifteen municipalities under Act III (B.C.) of 1884 and eight unions under Act V (B.C.) of 1876. Three municipalities were authorised to elect their own chairmen. General or partial revisions of assessment were carried out in eight institutions, latrine fees were levied for the first time in two towns and the average incidence of taxation per head of population rose slightly. Expenditure on conservancy grew from 25 to 30 per cent. of the total expenditure. All municipalities ended the year in a sound financial position.

Year ending 31st March 1919.

Local Boards.

9. The nineteen Local Boards were composed of 77 *ex-officio*, 45 nominated and 208 elected members. One Board had an elected non-official as Chairman. Owing chiefly to larger Government grants and the expansion of local rate receipts income increased from Rs. 20,73,952 to Rs. 22,23,794. Expenditure rose from Rs. 20,79,639 to Rs. 21,32,399. The Boards spent 26 per cent. of their free income on education against 31 per cent. in the preceding year. The expenditure of free money on roads and medical aid remained practically unchanged at 32 and 15 per cent. respectively. The rates of pay of vernacular teachers were enhanced. The number of Village Authorities increased from 64 to 80, and their membership grew from 310 to 490. In Kamrup, where 46 of these authorities are, enthusiasm and a spirit of self-help prevailed. An interesting attempt is being made to make these authorities the channel for agricultural improvements.

Year ending 31st March 1919.

Agriculture.

10. The staff was enlarged by the appointment of four additional Inspectors. The experiment in growing sugarcane on a large scale for the manufacture of white sugar was continued, and a leading Calcutta firm obtained settlement of a tract of land, in the neighbourhood of the experimental station, for the cultivation of sugarcane. Many setts of better kinds of cane were distributed to cultivators. There was a great demand for seed potatoes from the Shillong Farm. In Shillong it has now been proved that apples can be grown successfully and there is reason to anticipate that an apple-growing industry will be established in the hills of Assam. The measures taken to check the spread of water hyacinth were continued on a large scale. The policy of the Local Administration on the subject of improving the existing breeds of cattle was defined.

Nine months ending 31st March 1919.

Co-operative Societies.

11. The control of the department was transferred from the Excise Commissioner to the Director of Industries. Although the number of Co-operative Societies and their capital funds increased, the number of members diminished. At the close of the year over 12 per cent. of the total number of societies were under liquidation. In order to improve the financial position of rural societies, detailed orders were issued in regard to the calculation of profits and to the building up of reserve funds.

Year ending 31st March 1919.

Forests.

12. The total area of the reserved forests rose to 5,495 square miles, an increase during the five years of 1,114 square miles: unclassed State forests covered 16,309 square miles, a decrease during the same period of 2,092 square miles. A systematic division of waste lands into those suitable and those unsuitable for reservation was in progress. Financial results continued to improve and the surplus of receipts over expenses grew from Rs. 7,52,270 to Rs. 7,62,488. The outturn of timber, fuel and bamboos was the highest during the last ten years. In spite of a raising of the fees, which more than doubled the revenue, it was found that professional graziers' cattle had increased largely in number. In the Surma Valley a large veneer plant, the first of its kind in India, was erected by the Surma Valley Saw Mills Company for the manufacture of tea boxes. In order to protect the supply, the system of leasing elephant mahals was revised. It was found that the grazing of buffaloes over light jungle land helped the regeneration of *simul* trees and the annual burning of *sâl* forests introduced in 1916 proved beneficial.

Year ending 30th June 1919.

Tae.

13. The tea industry prospered in spite of somewhat unfavourable weather conditions. The yield of black tea increased from 242,856,597 lbs. to 249,411,190 lbs. and of green tea from 2,767,319 lbs. (revised figure) to 3,858,903 lbs. Average Calcutta prices per pound for the Brahmaputra Valley rose from 8 annas 2 pies to 9 annas 1 pie and for the Surma Valley from 6 annas 3½ pies to 6 annas 9 pies. The number of gardens expanded from 796 to 814 and the area under tea from 399,690 to 405,951 acres.

Year ending 31st December 1918.

The number of immigrant labourers was the highest on record for many years. The total strength of the labour force rose to 1,084,957, an increase of 144,589. The health of immigrants had been impaired in their home districts, where scarcity prevailed, and in consequence many fell victims to cholera and influenza on their way to Assam. The general unhealthiness of the year was reflected in the tea gardens by a fall in the birth-rate and a rise in the death-rate. There were only six cases of fraudulent and irregular recruitment: of these, only two were found to be true. Only two complaints of ill treatment were made by coolies against managers. Coolies held of Government as tenant 252,247 acres of land and as sub-tenants 32,967 acres.

Year ending 30th June 1919.

Trade.

14. Imports fell from 9,843,694 maunds to 7,732,056 maunds, but their value increased from Rs. 9,57,88,861 to Rs. 9,86,61,678. Exports rose from 12,822,913 maunds to 13,875,861 maunds and in value from Rs. 14,65,54,977 to Rs. 16,02,30,230. The principal imports were apparel, coal and coke, manufactured cotton, grain, pulse, metals and metal goods, kerosine, mustard oil, salt, betel-nuts, sugar, tobacco, manufactured wood, drugs, gunny bags and cloth, wines, spirits, opium, dried fruits, nuts and chillies. All but kerosine, salt, gunnies, wines, spirits and opium decreased. The principal exports were paddy, tea, timber, chalk and lime, jute, kerosine, husked rice, fresh fruits and vegetables, mustard seed, raw hides, raw cotton and lac. The most noticeable increases in exports were those of kerosine from 100,168 to 918,614 maunds and of rice and paddy from 1,857,560 to 3,743,528 maunds.

Year ending 31st March 1919.

There was no change in the number or position of the stations for registering frontier trade, but the statistics of trade with Bhutan registered at Tambulpur from January to March were found to be merely a duplicate registration of trade *viâ* Darranga and were excluded. Owing partly to this change, and partly to the influenza epidemic which checked intercourse with the tribes living beyond the frontier, the total value of this trade fell in value from Rs. 33,34,867 to Rs. 18,44,433.

Excise.

15. The demand for exciseable articles, which during the preceding three years had shown a steady diminution, increased sharply. Revenue rose, by 8·8 per cent., from Rs. 53,71,664 to Rs. 59,27,998. This expansion was due partly to increase in consumption and partly to enhancement of duty on country spirit and opium. The consumption of country spirit increased by 12·4 per cent., of *ganja* by 9·6 per cent., and of opium by 3·9 per cent.

Year ending 31st March 1919.

The objects of the Excise policy of the Administration were defined to be—first, to prevent all forms of smuggling; secondly, to discourage all forms of vice, drunkenness and excess; and, thirdly, to give reasonable facilities to moderate consumers, particulary the working classes, to obtain a little wholesome refreshment after their day's work. In view of the all-round increase in consumption the Chief Commissioner decided to curtail the hours during which country liquor shops remain open, to raise the price of *ganja* and to see whether a system of registering opium consumers cannot be introduced generally. In the Sadiya Frontier Tract, in order to check the spread of the opium habit among the hill tribes, opium-eaters were registered. Further progress was made with the policy of discouraging the consumption of spirit in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills.

Vital statistics.

16. In July 1918 epidemic influenza appeared in a mild form, and returned with virulence in November. It is estimated that in all during the year this disease accounted for 100,000 lives. The death-rate rose from 27·09 to 46·1 per mille. Births increased from 31·35 to 34·98 per mille. Increased attention was paid by the vaccination staff to the work of inspecting village registers of vital statistics.

Year ending 31st December 1918.

Hospitals and Dispensaries.

17. Again shortage of officers compelled the closure of hospitals and dispensaries and by the end of the year the number of these had fallen from 210 to 194. Four Civil Assistant Surgeons and eight Sub-Assistant Surgeons were deputed to Military duty, making a total of fourteen Civil Assistant Surgeons and fifty-one Sub-Assistant Surgeons since the

Year ending 31st December 1918.

beginning of the war. In addition, twenty-six Sub-Assistant Surgeons were employed on the Kuki operations. Seventy-four thousand eight hundred sixteen persons were given out-treatment for influenza.

Lunatic Asylum.

18. The average number of lunatics under confinement increased from 341 to 377. Although the total number of admissions to hospital rose from 122 to 195 and the number of deaths from 19 to 22, the death-rate remained the lowest recorded in India.

Year ending 31st December 1918.

Pasteur Institute.

19. In the second year of its existence, the volume of work at the Pasteur Institute in Shillong more than doubled. One thousand and ninety-one persons commenced and 1,068 underwent the full course of anti-rabic treatment: of these 90 were Europeans and the rest Indians. Thirteen deaths from hydrophobia occurred after treatment, a rate of 1·22 per cent.: six only died later than fifteen days after completing the treatment. Striking results were obtained in the treatment of *kala-azar* by intravenous injections of tartar emetic. A vaccine prepared for use in combating influenza achieved wide popularity.

Year ending 31st December 1918.

Sanitation.

20. The campaign against *kala-azar* was prosecuted vigorously. A detailed survey of the areas affected or likely to be affected was undertaken and operations undertaken in Sibsagar gave promising results. The disease showed a tendency to spread in the Garo Hills.

Year ending 31st December 1918.

Education.

21. The decline in the total enrolment in public institutions, which in the preceding year was 1·5 per cent., this year amounted to 2·7 per cent. This was attributed to the general economic conditions produced by the war and to the special effects of the influenza epidemic, earthquake and floods. Although their enrolment diminished, public institutions increased in number from 4,619 to 4,680 and the expenditure of the Department rose from Rs. 25,82,270 to Rs. 26,83,149. The income from fees continued to expand.

Year ending 31st March 1919.

The popularity of collegiate education showed no sign of waning: the number of students, which in the year before had risen from 688 to 811, increased by 74. Assam continued in its place at the head of the provinces in regard to the success of its colleges at the various examinations of the Calcutta University. The five years' experimental period set for the Law College expired in July 1919 and was extended for an additional two years. The number of students fell slightly.

The total number of girls at school fell from ·86 to ·85 per cent., of the population, but for the first time the number of girls reading in girls' schools exceeded that of girls reading in boys' schools.

The number of Muhammadans reading in recognized schools decreased from 49,864 to 47,097, but at college their number rose from 126 to 133.

Finance.

22. There was a further expansion of revenue. The total receipts rose from Rs. 1,93,07,374 to Rs. 2,06,64,320. Land revenue, excise and forests showed the principal increases. An assignment of Rs. 41,68,510 was made from Provincial to Imperial. Of this a sum of Rs. 20,10,000 was on account of expenditure on operations against the Kukis. The total expenditure rose from Rs. 1,47,31,708 to Rs. 1,73,49,617, mainly on account of the charges of the Kuki operations. Strict economy was the order of the day and actually, excluding these charges, there was a saving of Rs. 9,47,000 on the budget estimate.

Year ending 31st March 1919.

PART II.

THE REPORT.

[Prescribed maximum length—50 pages]

PART II.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT.

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REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION OF ASSAM

FOR THE YEAR

1918-19.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

PART II—Report.

CHAPTER I.

PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY.

For—

SECTION 1.—Physical Features of the Country, Area, Climate and Chief Staples.

SECTION 2.—Historical Summary.

SECTION 3.—Form of Administration.

SECTION 4.—Character of Land Tenures, System of Surveys and Settlements.

SECTION 5.—Civil Divisions of British territory.

SECTION 6.—Details of the last Census, Tribes and Languages.

[See General Administration Report, 1911-1912, Part II, pages I-75].

SECTION 7.—CHANGES IN THE ADMINISTRATION.

Changes in the Administration.

The Hon'ble Sir Nicholas Dodd Beatson Bell, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., assumed charge of the Administration on the 1st April 1918 and held it throughout the year.

WAR AND THE ADMINISTRATION.

War and the Administration.

2. As the end of the Great War falls within the period covered by this Report, the Chief Commissioner takes this opportunity of putting on record an epitome of the contributions made by this province. From its cadre the Administration in all spared 174 officers for military duty. Of these, twenty-two were drawn from the Indian Civil Service, seventeen from the Public Works Department, fifteen from the Assam Rifles, eleven from the Indian Police, ten from the Imperial Forest Service, seven each from the Indian Medical Service and the Indian Medical Department, five from the military members of the Assam Commission, four each from the Indian Educational Service and the Provincial Civil Service, two each from the Survey Department and the Indian Finance Department, one each from the Indian Agricultural Service and the Provincial Educational Service, one was an Inspector of Police, fourteen were Civil Assistant Surgeons and fifty-one were Sub-Assistant Surgeons. The Chief Commissioner much regrets the loss of eight officers who fell in the service of their country—Major C. Bliss, Captain A. M. Graham, Major H. C. Nicolay, Captain G. D. Mathew, Captain H. St. G. J. Pulford, W. J. Arbuthnot, A. C. Hay and H. G. M. Vickers. The Administration is the poorer for their loss. Valuable service was also rendered to the Empire by the non-official members of the Assam Valley Light Horse and Surma Valley Light Horse, 168 of whom joined the Indian Army Reserve of Officers, and 79 the regular forces, while 31 served with labour corps. The Chief Commissioner regrets to record that 15 of their number were killed. Until the Kuki Operations engaged them, the Assam Rifles sent a steady stream of recruits to

PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY.

the Army. In all 3,232 officers and men were contributed. A double company of Assamese was formed and a double company of Manipuris, raised by His Highness the Maharaja of Manipur, saw service in Mesopotamia and was maintained by regular drafts. A few young men joined the Bengali Regiment and 239 recruits joined the Royal Artillery Depôt at Belgaum. Volunteers were put through a more rigorous training on the conversion of their two regiments, the Assam Valley and Surma Valley Light Horse, into Indian Defence Force units. Time and trouble were not grudged by the members of these Regiments, who, whether non-officials or officials, were practically all busy men carrying on their usual work short-handed or otherwise handicapped by war conditions. The principal recruiting area was the Assam Valley, where Captain D. P. Copeland, O.B.E., an *ex*-Forest Officer of wide experience in Assam, was particularly successful: he recruited as combatants 3,069 persons who were passed fit by the doctor, 200 for a mule corps and 100 for the Army Bearer Corps. Labour Corps, of a strength of approximately 2,000 men each, were raised in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, the Lushai Hills, the Naga Hills and in Manipur respectively, and of 500 strong in the Garo Hills. These corps served in France. From Sylhet a Labour Corps about 1,000 strong was sent to Mesopotamia. Sylhet also provided a number of men as marine ratings and in all supplied about 2,300 combatant and non-combatant recruits. In 1918, as a sequel to the Delhi Conference, two Divisional War Committees, comprising the leading officials and non-officials, with the Commissioner as President were formed, one for either Valley, to superintend and promote recruiting, to conduct a war loan campaign, and to discharge the functions of Resources Committees, Publicity Boards and Employment Bureaux. The total amount subscribed by residents in Assam to Indian War Loans cannot be ascertained, as no separate account could be kept of subscriptions made in Calcutta and other places outside the province, but it is known that 25 lakhs of rupees worth were taken up in Assam. Similarly the statistics of the amounts given to war charities are incomplete, but they show that nearly nine lakhs were contributed. Donations for war purposes to the amount of Rs. 55,500 were received and there were sundry contributions of material, including an air-propelled boat and goods of the value of about Rs. 20,000 for the Red Cross Fund.

SECTION 8.—Frontier Relations and Feudatory States.

[*See* General Administration Report for 1911-12, Part II, pages 76-85.]

SECTION 9.—Relations with Tributary States and Frontier Tribes.

FEUDATORY STATES.

MANIPUR.

[*See* Report of the Manipur State for the year ending the 31st March 1919 and the Report on the Frontier Tribes of Assam for the year ending the 31st March 1919.]

[Tribute:—Rs. 50,000. Population (1911):— 346,222. Average gross revenue for last 5 years:—Rs. 6,42,949. Military Police:—Sanctioned strength 7 officers and 135 men. Products:—Rice, vegetables, sugarcane, tobacco, wax, tea seed and other forest products, ponies and cattle. Manufactures:—Silk, cotton cloth, brass and other metal utensils, mustard oil, a few articles of ivory and jewellery, some leather work and coarse salt. Minerals:—Iron, limestone and copper.]

[Maharaja:—His Highness Maharaja Chura Chand Singh, C.B.E., aged 33 years, caste Kshatriya. His Highness has three daughters by his first wife Rani Ngangbom Dhanamanjuri Ibamecha; two sons, aged 11 and 8 years, by his second wife Rani Chingakhom Sayama Sakhi; one daughter by his third wife Rani Ngangbom Preo Sakhi; one son, aged 5 years, by his fifth wife Rani Haobom Lilabati.]

General.

3. The labour corps came back from France in June 1918 and the reserve of the Manipur Double Company, which was under training at Lansdowne, also returned. A Double Company of Manipuris was on active service in Mesopotamia.

The conduct of the Manipuri population was good throughout the year. Some disturbance was caused in the southern part of the valley by the raids committed by Kuki rebels.

Hill Tribes Kuki rebellion.

4. During the cold weather of 1918-19 the Kuki rebellion was suppressed by the combined operations of the Assam Rifles and the Burma Military Police acting under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Keary, K.C.B, K.C.I.E., D.S.O., Commanding the Burma Division, and measures were taken to secure permanent peace on this frontier of Assam. This rising was confined almost entirely to the Thado Kukis and to the Manhlum and Mangvum Kukis of south and south-eastern Manipur. It is estimated that the rebels numbered 40,000 persons scattered over some 6,000 square miles of rugged hills surrounding the Manipur Valley and extending to the Somra Tract and the Thaungdut State in Burma. The first outbreak occurred

in April 1917, and the measures taken to restore order during 1917-18 met with no permanent success. During the rainy season of 1918 the Kukis raided and harried loyal tribesmen and interrupted traffic. It was, therefore, decided to take concerted action under military direction from both the Burma and Assam sides. Brigadier General Macquoid, D.S.O., took command of the operations in the Assam area. The rebels were systematically attacked, defeated and disarmed, and by April 1919 peace had been completely restored.

Administration of the land revenue.

5. The land revenue demand including arrears was Rs. 5,40,936, and of this Rs. 4,41,961 were collected, Rs. 5,863 were remitted and Rs. 93,082 remained outstanding. The current demand for the valley increased by Rs. 5,573 and the percentage of collection improved slightly. House-tax was levied at the usual rate of Rs. 3 on all houses in the hills and annas ten on the houses of all hillmen who were *bona-fide* cultivators of land in the valley. The demand was Rs. 1,14,296, of which Rs. 77,045 were collected, Rs. 887 were remitted and Rs. 36,364 remained unrealised.

Production and trade.

6. The area under rice cultivation was estimated at 153,347 acres and for all other crops together at 13,884 acres. The paddy crop on the whole was reckoned as a 12-anna crop. The State sericultural operations in the hill villages were closed during the year. The weaving industry suffered from dearness of yarn and scarcity of cotton. The extraction of teak from the forests bordering the Kabaw Valley by the Bombay-Burma Trading Corporation, Limited, was almost completed. The chief exports were rice, timber and cattle and the principal imports were piece-goods, kerosine oil, salt, dried fish, wheat flour, hardware and betel-nut.

Justice.

7. The number of offences reported was 504 and the number of persons brought to trial 914. The civil courts disposed of 2,091 suits of an aggregate value of Rs. 1,12,959 and of 424 applications for execution of decrees.

Finance.

8. The gross total revenue of the State, excluding the "water-rate," was Rs. 7,59,149, an increase of Rs. 56,499. The total expenditure was Rs. 7,13,089. At the close of the year the State was indebted to Government to the extent of Rs. 3,64,801, Rs. 96,051 being on account of the Water Works Loan, and Rs. 2,68,750 on account of the floods. The State has Rs. 33,800 invested in the Government Four per cent., Terminable Loan of 1915-16 and Rs. 1,00,000 in the Indian War Loan. The closing balance, excluding the invested amounts, was Rs. 3,84,293.

Miscellaneous.

9. Three dispensaries remained closed for the greater part of the year, as the doctors and compounders in charge were employed with the Kuki expeditionary forces Out of 21,349 vaccinations, 16,620 were successful. The influenza epidemic caused high mortality and was followed by an outbreak of small-pox in a virulent form. During the year 3,577 animals were treated in the Veterinary Dispensary at Imphal. Lower Primary education is free, but not compulsory, and the cost to the State on all accounts of education was Rs. 52,641. A State printing press was started this year.

FRONTIER TRIBES.

General.

10. The Kuki rebellion came to an end. Hill Daflas raided a plains village, and independent Mishmis murdered a sepoy. With these exceptions, the hill tribes, both independent and administered, were well-behaved. There were fewer visitors than usual from the neighbouring hills where influenza was prevalent. Frontier trade diminished. Crops in the hills were said to have been good. The coolie corps which had gone to France from Manipur, and from the Naga, Lushai, Khasi and Jaintia, and the Garo Hills returned.

Bhutias.

11. The usual fair was held at Darranga, but it was not so well attended as usual.

Tibetans and Monbas.

12. The usual fair was held at Odalguri and the customary *posa* of Rs. 5,000 was paid to the two Jongpens of Talukjong on behalf of the Drepung monastery at Lhassa. The number of Tibetans, Monbas and Bhutias visiting the plains was far below the average owing to the ravages of influenza and small-pox in Tibet and the Monyul.

Akas.

13. The Akas escaped the epidemic of influenza. They had no internal troubles and were at peace with their neighbours.

Daflas.

14. Generally the Daflas were well-behaved, but certain Daflas of Miripathar in May 1918 raided the plains Dafla villages of Gaigaon and Boranipathar, and carried off 59 captives, of whom 14 escaped and returned to the plains. They also killed two persons on the way. The Political Officer visited Pigerong, the principal village in the Miripathar, and brought back 20 captives; the rest came back later, all but one who chose to stay in the hills.

Hill Miris and Apa Tanangs. Abors.

15. The Hill Miris came down this year much later than usual and escaped the influenza. The Apa Tanangs visited the plains in large numbers and did a good deal of work for the tea gardens.

16. The independent Abors gave no trouble; they suffered heavily from influenza. With a view to controlling the excessive consumption of opium by the tribes, a system of registration was commenced. Opium shops for the supply of registered consumers only were opened at Pasighat for Abors and at Chaukham for Khamtis.

Mishmis.

17. In revenge for the execution in 1918 of Tagi Mideren of Elapoin, 3 men of that village murdered a sepoy of the Assam Rifles at Nizamghat.

Margherita, Rangpang, Bardwaria, Namsangiya, and Barmithunia Nagas.

18. The conduct of these Nagas as usual was good. The blockade against the Rangpang and Yogli Nagas was withdrawn provisionally.

Naga Hills.

19. A column was despatched to the Lapvomi-Shiloi area in April-May 1918 to prevent Kukis obtaining a foothold in the Lanier Valley, and outposts were established there. A bridle path from Phekrokejuma to Karami was completed. In spite of influenza, which caused high mortality, 2,000 coolies were furnished for the Kuki operations.

Khasi and Jaintia Hills.

20. Raja U Dakhor Singh, Siem of Khyrim, U Roba Singh, Siem of Cherra, and U Ijon, Siem of Rambrai, died during the year and U Olim Singh, U Join Manik and U Shonro, respectively, were nominated and confirmed as Siems in their places. Some 34,000 maunds of corundum were exported from the mines at Nongmaweit.

Lushai Hills, Garo Hills and Hill Tippera.

21. On the whole, the Lushais were little affected by the Kuki disturbances, but there was unrest in the neighbourhood of South Vonlaiphai. The village of Vawmbuk in Lungleh refused to supply coolies for a column going to Sangao and was punished. On the southern border the chiefs in the unadministered area maintained their attitude of passive and sullen recalcitrance. With the exception of the village of Laikei, they avoided the payment of revenue and chief's dues for their *jhums* in British territory.

The Garos were quiet and well-behaved throughout the year. Relations with the Raja of Hill Tippera continued to be friendly.

SECTION 10.—CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year ending the 30th June 1919.]

Condition of the people.

22. On the whole the weather was unfavourable and the outturn of crops was below normal. Rice at the beginning of the year in the Surma Valley was abnormally cheap and money was scarce. In the Assam Valley, except in Kamrup and Nowgong, the price was high, even at harvest time. In the latter part of the year the prices of rice and other foodstuffs in both valleys reached an abnormal pitch. To steady prices and protect supplies, steps were taken with a fair measure of success to prevent rice from leaving the province and to secure the free import of rice from Burma. The price of cloth and other commodities was very high. Standard cloth was introduced and sold to the poor classes. Its introduction was of some assistance. The regulation of the maximum wholesale and retail prices of salt was more than justified by results. Towards the close of the year there was an increase in the price of kerosine oil. Wages were high in the Assam Valley. The prevailing high prices of all commodities adversely affected the whole population, particularly persons with fixed incomes. In the closing months of the year there was distress in some parts of the Surma Valley: for a short time gratuitous relief was given to poor widows and infirm persons in the worst areas. The number of post office savings bank accounts opened increased from 16,459 to 18,617 and the amount deposited from Rs. 10,77,375 to Rs. 15,19,082, while the amount withdrawn decreased from Rs. 11,72,798 to Rs. 11,04,232. There was much sickness. Influenza caused high mortality in almost every district. Cholera was prevalent in Cachar, Sylhet, the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and in several districts in the Assam Valley. The migration of settlers from Eastern Bengal and Nepal into Kamrup and Goalpara continued, but the influx of settlers from Mymensingh into Mangaldai and of those from the Surma Valley into Nowgong is said to have diminished. A severe earthquake occurred in the evening of the 8th July 1918. Considerable damage was done both to public and to private property throughout the district of Sylhet and 53 persons lost their lives.

CHAPTER II.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAND.

SECTION 1.—REALISATION OF THE REVENUE.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year ending the 30th June 1919.]

General. 23. An account of the demand and collection of land revenue will be found in Chapter V.—"Revenue and Finance." The total settled area was 14,140 square miles, against 14,041 square miles in the preceding year. The total revenue demand on the current account rose from Rs. 77,18,710 to Rs. 80,15,874, an increase of 3·85 per cent. as compared with 1·28 per cent. in the year before. In all districts most of the growth in revenue was due to new settlements, but in Nowgong part was due to reclassification and resettlement of post settlement *dags*.

Permanently-settled estates. 24. There was no alteration in the area and revenue demand of the permanently-settled estates in the Assam Valley Division. In the Surma Valley the number of such estates increased by one and the revenue demand by Rs. 3. The whole demand was realized in the Assam Valley. In the Surma Valley the balance outstanding in Sylhet was Rs. 96,910.

Temporarily-settled estates. 25. The number of temporarily-settled estates rose from 1,139,117 to 1,182,248 : their area and revenue demand expanded by 52,856 acres and Rs. 2,84,645, respectively. These estates covered 43·47 per cent. of the total settled area of the province and contributed 90·27 per cent. of the total demand. The total area settled at full rates for ordinary cultivation in the Surma Valley and Hill Districts Division was 733,145 acres, a decrease of 16,488 acres due chiefly to the transfer of some 13,000 acres to special cultivation, this having been wrongly classed before and also in Sylhet to the reservation of land for grazing and the transfer of low lands and *bils* formerly settled as *mahal-samil* fisheries to class 1 fisheries. The revenue of these estates increased by Rs. 1,57,392 owing to the resettlement of Cachar and of the Jaintia parganas. In the Assam Valley the area settled at full rates for ordinary cultivation rose from 2,280,658 to 2,330,385 acres and the revenue demand assessed thereon from Rs. 53,02,969 to Rs. 53,86,774.

Remittance of revenue and local rates by special money order. 26. In the district of Sylhet, where the system of remitting revenue and local rates by postal money orders is in force, the number of such money orders fell from 3,565 to 3,310, but the amount remitted rose from Rs. 14,235 to Rs. 14,462.

Coercive means employed for the collection of land revenue. 27. There was a substantial decrease in both valleys in the number of warrants of attachment issued, but an increase in the number of estates notified for sale. On the whole there was no noteworthy variation in the extent to which coercive process was employed. The total number of estates notified for sale for non-payment of Government revenue was 14,732, the number of estates actually sold was 429 only.

Processes. 28. There was a decrease in the number of revenue processes served from 221,877 to 214,640 and in the amount of fees realized from Rs. 1,46,294 to Rs. 1,45,501.

Miscellaneous land revenue. 29. The demand on account of miscellaneous land revenue fell from Rs. 9,15,123 to Rs. 8,72,958. There was a decrease of Rs. 46,241 in the receipts from mineral oil in Lakhimpur. Rupees 8,30,374 were collected and Rs. 7,226 remitted.

Loans. 30. The amount advanced during the year was Rs. 33,757 against Rs. 1,01,560 in the year before. The amount outstanding at the beginning of the year was Rs. 31,26,165 and the total outstanding at the close of the year Rs. 25,40,558. A sum of Rs. 27,97,907 was due for recovery within the year, of which Rs. 6,19,098 were collected and Rs. 266 remitted. Of the total sum of Rs. 3,03,456 due on account of interest, Rs. 87,332 were collected and Rs. 38 remitted. The total amount of principal and interest for the whole province overdue at the close of the year was Rs. 21,72,940, of which Sylhet alone was responsible for Rs. 15,92,344.

Other revenue work. 31. No new irrigation or drainage works were undertaken during the year.

Partitions. 32. The number of partition cases instituted during the year, other than those dealt with under rule 214 of the Land Records Manual, was 273 against 281 in 1917-18, and 225 cases were pending from the previous year. Of the 498 cases for disposal 275 cases were decided.

SECTION 2.—SURVEY AND SETTLEMENT.

[*See* Report on Survey and Settlement Operations in Assam for the year ending the 30th September 1919.]

Surveys.

33. The control of the Assam Survey Department remained in the hands of the Superintendent, Eastern Circle, Survey of India. For the cadastral survey 318 villages of a total area of 185 square miles were surveyed in extension by the Assam Traverse Party : 3 villages in area 41 square miles were traversed by a mandal and, for these, computations were completed and plots supplied by the Traverse Party.

Nearly 24 miles of the boundary between Kamrup and Darrang were traversed, part of the boundary between the Chapar and Gauripur parganas in Goalpara was surveyed and mapped and part was demarcated. A portion of the boundary between Sylhet and Hill Tippera was surveyed and demarcated.

Sickness and the early setting in of the rains prevented the completion of the full programme of work for the year.

Comparative maps of the boundaries between Kamrup and Goalpara, Sylhet and Hill Tippera, and between the Guma and Ghurla parganas in Goalpara were prepared. Twenty thousand eight hundred and fifty-one maps were printed in the Drawing Office, a decrease of 22,107.

In the Survey school the number of students fell from 28 to 21. One Assistant Commissioner, 4 Sub-Deputy Collectors and 21 mandals underwent training.

Settlement.

34. The reclassification of land taken up in Darrang since the last resettlement was carried on. Extension survey was carried out by local agency in the plains districts and more particularly in Sylhet and Darrang, where special staffs were employed.

SECTION 3.—LAND RECORDS.

[*See* Report on Survey and Settlement Operations in Assam for the year ending the 30th September 1919.]

Land Records.

35. A revision of the scale of Supervisor Kanungos was sanctioned in the proportion of $\frac{2}{3}$rds in the 1st grade and of $\frac{1}{3}$rd in the second grade. One second-grade Supervisor Kanungo was added to the sanctioned strength in Sibsagar.

The staff of recorders was increased by 4 in Goalpara, 3 in Kamrup and 2 in Garo Hills. The number of resident recorders increased in all districts except Cachar, Kamrup and the Garo Hills.

SECTION 4.—SETTLEMENT FOR SPECIAL CULTIVATION (WASTE LAND).

[*See* Resolution on Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year ending the 30th June 1919.]

Settlement for special cultivation.

36. The total area settled for special cultivation rose from 1,266,302 to 1,295,549 acres and the revenue assessed thereon from Rs. 8,59,491 to Rs. 9,12,682, an increase of 2·31 per cent. in area and 6·19 per cent. in revenue as compared with 5·23 per cent. in area and 10·6 per cent. in the revenue demand of the preceding year.

There was no change in areas to which Section I of the Settlement Rules applied. Applications under this Section were scrutinised much more closely than hitherto. In the Assam Valley the number of applications fell from 106 to 52 : in Sylhet there were 28 applications. In the district of Lakhimpur applications under Section II were made in the Sadr subdivision for an aggregate area of 92,380 acres. These figures show the keenness of the demand for tea land in this district, where the general idea seems to be that in a few years there will be no more land available.

Changes were made in Section II of the Settlement Rules in order to facilitate the settlement of land for special cultivation under this section, rather than Section I. It was laid down that when it is necessary in order to provide that the assessment shall be made upon actual, as distinct from prospective, assets, leases under Section II may be granted on concessional terms. Deputy Commissioners and Commissioners were empowered to deal finally with all applications under Section II up to a limit of 600 and 3,000 acres, respectively.

SECTION 5.—GOVERNMENT ESTATES.

Nil.

SECTION 6.—WARDS' AND ATTACHED ESTATES.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year ending the 30th June 1919.]

General.

37. The assumption of charge of two estates in the district of Sylhet, the Ahmed Kabir and Tanjunnessa Khatun Wards' Estates, and one in the district of Goalpara, the Bijni Raj Estate, raised the number of estates under the management of the Court of Wards from twelve to fifteen. No estate was released during the year.

Revenue, rent and cesses.

38. The total revenue and cesses due to Government, including arrears, amounted to Rs. 94,526, of which Rs. 76,770 were paid, including an advance payment of Rs. 2,873. The outstanding balance of Rs. 20,629 was mainly due from the two "A" mahals in the Garo Hills belonging to the Mechpara and Bijni Raj Estates. In the Khan Bahadur and Birasri Wards' Estates the arrears of rent and cesses due to superior landlords amounted to Rs. 6,631 and Rs. 361, respectively.

Collections.

39. The demand on account of rents and cesses due to the estates, including arrears of Rs. 13,30,076, amounted to Rs. 21,02,895. Of this sum, Rs. 7,16,671 (including an advance collection of Rs. 1,418 for the subsequent year), or 92·73 per cent. of the current demand, were collected. In the Ilias Ali Wards' Estate the collections were equal to 124 per cent. of the current demand, in Mechpara 109 per cent., and in Prithimpassa to 101 per cent. In all the other estates collections were below normal.

Debts.

40. The Mechpara Estate paid a sum of Rs. 1,04,731 towards the repayment of debts, leaving a balance of Rs. 7,33,403. The Bijni Raj Estate paid its debts to the amount of Rs. 1,43,324, leaving a balance of Rs. 34,231. The debts of the Kumar Ward's Estate were reduced by Rs. 76,744, leaving a balance of Rs. 4,76,563. The Prithimpassa and Khan Bahadur Wards' Estates paid off Rs. 13,997 and Rs. 2,586, respectively.

Management charges and improvement.

41. The percentage of the cost of management to the current demand was 12·43, as compared with 13·24 in the previous year.

The Bijni Raj Estate spent Rs. 3,962 on schools, Rs. 1,596 on dispensaries, and Rs. 1,237 on miscellaneous improvements. The Abhoyapuri High School and the charitable dispensary at Abhoyapuri are wholly maintained by this estate. The Mechpara and the Prithimpassa Estates spent Rs. 6,304 and Rs. 3,566, respectively, on schools, dispensaries and other works of public utility. The Kumar Ward's Estate spent Rs. 1,969 in maintaining the Raja Girish Chandra High School at Sylhet and Rs. 465 on dispensaries and miscellaneous improvements.

SECTION 7.—REVENUE AND RENT-PAYING CLASSES.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year ending the 30th June 1919.]

Relation between landlords and tenants.

42. Except in Sylhet and Goalpara, where Bengal Act VIII of 1869 is in force, there is no law of landlord and tenant in the province other than the Transfer of Property Act. In Goalpara district the number of rent suits filed rose from 1,189 to 1,473, while three notices under section 14 of Act VIII of 1869 were issued for enhancement of rent. After the close of the year the Government of India sanctioned the extension of Chapter X of the Bengal Tenancy Act to the permanently-settled estates of the Goalpara district with a view to the preparation of a record-of-rights.

CHAPTER III.

PROTECTION.

SECTION 1.—LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY.

[*See* General Administration Report for 1911-12, Part II, pages 92-94.]

SECTION 2.—COURSE OF LEGISLATION.

[For the year ending the 31st March 1919.]

Meetings of the Council. 43. The Legislative Council met on three days for the discussion of the budget and the transaction of other business.

Acts passed. 44. No Acts were passed.

Bill discussed. 45. The Assam Local Self-Government Bill was introduced and referred to a Select Committee.

SECTION 3.—POLICE.

[*See* Report on the Administration of the Police Department in Assam for the year ending the 31st December 1918.]

ASSAM RIFLES.

Personnel. 46. The employment of a large proportion of the force on active service necessitated the retention of the time-expired officers of the Assam Rifles and the temporary appointment of 20 Additional Assistant Commandants.

Strength and distribution. 47. Parties sent out in 1917 before drafts to the Army had been discontinued brought in 554 recruits and a number of volunteers returned from service with the Army; consequently at the end of the year the battalions were overstrength. Of the total number of recruits 523 were Gurkhas.

Efficiency. 48. The contingents employed on the Kuki operations discarded their Martini-Henry rifles for ·303 Lee-Enfields and were provided with both rifle and hand grenades as well as a few mountain guns. Except in the case of the 1st (Lushai Hills) Battalion, there was an increase of punishment.

Casualties. 49. From December 1917 to May 1919 the casualties in the Kuki operations were 28 killed in action or died of wounds, 47 wounded and 84 died of disease contracted in the field. These casualties were greater than in any previous frontier operation on this side of India. The force generally lost less men than in the preceding year from retirements, resignation, discharge and failure to rejoin on expiry of leave and more from dismissal, desertion and death.

Health. 50. The percentage of admission into hospital to the actual strength expanded from 70·25 to 86·64 and the number of deaths increased from 35 to 130. Influenza with pneumonia was responsible for more than half the deaths.

Military operations and frontier outposts. 51. Under the command of Brigadier-General Macquoid, D.S.O., altogether 420 rank and file from the 1st (Lushai Hills) Battalion, 460 from the 2nd (Lakhimpur) Battalion, about 800 from the 3rd (Naga Hills) Battalion, and the whole of the 4th Battalion were employed in the suppression of the Kuki rebellion. In addition a guard was furnished for the North Cachar Hills when they were threatened by the Kukis. The Naga Hills Battalion furnished an escort for the Political Officer, Balipara Frontier Tract, for a dash into the Miripathar, just before the rains broke, to recover some captives who had been kidnapped by Daflas from near Halem. Detachments were also engaged in North Lakhimpur and Sylhet in special duty in connection with *hát*-looting. Owing to the murder of a sepoy at Nizamghat, the Karimpani outpost, which had been abolished during the war, was re-established.

CIVIL POLICE.

Strength. 52. The strength of the force at the close of the year was 3,633 against 3,622 in 1917. Recruits numbered 359, of whom 218 were local men.

Traning and conduct. 53. The standard of discipline generally was good. There was a slight fall in the number of officers and men rewarded for good work, and the number of departmental punishments rose from 727 to 896. Of the 99 criminal charges brought against the police, 76 were for minor offences; and of the 92 charges investigated, only 43 were held to be true, 33 were found to be false and the rest doubtful.

PROTECTION.

The system of drilling Sub-Inspectors at the headquarters of the district and the men at police stations was maintained with good results.

Health. 54. Admissions to hospital increased from 1,328 to 1,463 and deaths from 45 to 68.

Reserve. 55. There was no change in the sanctioned strength of the armed or of the ordinary reserves.

Railway Police. 56. The number of cases dealt with by the Railway Police, 458, was almost the same as in 1917. Owing to the vigilance of the railway patrol staff, who wore uniform instead of plain clothes while on duty, the number of cases of running train thefts decreased from 40 to 23. In the matter of "missing goods" there was a decrease in the number of cases from 237 to 125. Of these cases the number connected with crime fell from 120 to 76. There was a further fall in the number of railway accidents from 190 to 159 and in the number of persons, 38, who lost their lives in them.

River Police 57. The systematic patrolling of the waterways in Sylhet resulted in a marked decrease in crime in the area patrolled.

Rural Police. 58. There were 6,536 dafadars and choukidars, and of these 549 were rewarded. Although the number rewarded was less by 431 than in 1917 the average reward per head increased from Rs. 6 to Rs. 7. The percentage of the force punished fell from 55·74 to 50·76. The total cost of the rural police rose from Rs. 3,48,495 to Rs. 3,49,352.

Finance. 59. The net cost of the Department during the financial year 1918-19 was Rs. 38,20,449 against Rs. 23,67,903 in 1917-18. The increase occurred mainly under the head "Special Police—Assam Rifles," and was due to the debit of a sum of Rs. 15,75,421 which was incurred in connection with the Kuki punitive measures and which will be treated as an Imperial charge.

Crime. 60. The number of cognisable cases reported was 18,014, which was lower than any year since 1912 and some three thousand below the figures of 1917. Among the reasons given for this decrease were the exceptionally good rice harvest in 1917-18, good preventive work, the successful prosecution of notorious gangs of thieves and the influenza epidemic. Of cognisable cases dealt with by the Police, 37·24 per cent. were brought to trial as compared with 35·7 per cent. in 1917, and the ratio of convictions fell from 76·72 to 75·54 per cent.

As an exception to the general decrease in crime, the number of cases of dacoity reported increased from 25 to 38. This was due to the fact that some cases of *hât*-looting were classed as dacoities. These *hât*-looting cases were the outcome of resentment against shopkeepers on account of high prices. The first outbreak was in Goalpara in 1917, and was followed by an epidemic of such cases in Sylhet and later on by similar outbreaks in Lakhimpur and other districts. In most cases little violence was used and peace was promptly restored. In all 214 cases of *hât* or shop-looting were reported during the year, including 155 from Lakhimpur. The persons who were tried in connection with these cases numbered 1,774, of whom 1,135 were convicted.

Provincial Statement J. The number of cases remanded more than six times decreased slightly: 45 per cent. of all police cases were disposed of in two hearings.

Political crime. 61. Two cases of political crime occurred, both in Kamrup. Five anarchists were arrested, tried by a special Commission appointed under the Defence of India Act and imprisoned.

Miscellaneous. 62. The Criminal Investigation Department dealt with 45 cases. There was no material change in the amount of work done in the Finger Print Bureau. The percentage of references in which previous convictions were traced decreased to 7·75. The percentage of persons reconvicted to persons convicted of offences against property fell from 12 to 8·51 per cent.

SECTION 4.—CRIMINAL JUSTICE—PLAINS DISTRICTS.

[*See* High Court's Report on the Administration of Criminal Justice in the Province of Assam for the year ending the 31st December 1918.]

Staff. 63. The permanent staff employed on criminal work in the plains portion of the province consisted of two Sessions Judges, one Additional Sessions Judge, eight District Magistrates, fifty-one Subordinate Stipendiary Magistrates and twenty-five Honorary Magistrates. Two temporary Additional Sessions Judges worked in the Assam Valley Districts and Sylhet and Cachar and there was a temporary Assistant Sessions Judge in the Assam Valley throughout the year.

The following statement gives the figures for the past three years of offences reported, cases accepted as true, and cases brought to trial with the ratio of complaints dismissed or cases struck off as false to the total of cases instituted and the ratio of persons convicted to persons tried :—

Year.	Cases reported.	Cases reported as true.	Cases brought to trial.	Ratio of complaints dismissed.	Ratio of persons convicted to persons tried.
1	2	3	4	5	6
1918	37,259	27,592	18,031	26·6	41·1
1917	41,165	29,793	19,228	28·3	42·2
1916	43,111	30,606	20,177	28·9	43·5

Magistrates' Courts.

64. There was a general decrease of business in the Magistrates' courts. The number of cases disposed of fell from 19,107 to 17,993, of cases pending at the close of the year from 1,018 to 812, and of cases committed to Sessions from 237 to 226. The number of persons whose cases were decided dropped from 31,234 to 30,396, of persons convicted from 13,181 to 12,522 and of persons bound down to keep the peace or to be of good behaviour from 889 to 789. Sixty-two thousand four hundred and sixty-two witnesses were examined, a reduction of 3,354, and the total amount of the fines imposed fell from Rs. 1,33,684 to Rs. 1,19,861. Of the witnesses examined a higher proportion were discharged on the first day of hearing, *viz.*, 71·8 against 70·3 per cent. 48 per cent. of persons tried were convicted, a decrease of 5·8 per cent. 27·2 per cent. of the trials were summary.

Courts of Sessions.

65. Although the number of cases disposed of by the Sessions Courts fell from 233 to 223, the number of persons involved rose from 551 to 653. Three hundred ninety-two persons were convicted, 236 were discharged or acquitted and in the case of 25 reference was made to the High Court.

Seven persons were sentenced to death, but in three cases the High Court commuted the sentence to transportation for life, 12 persons were sentenced to transportation for life, 374 to rigorous imprisonment and 15 were fined.

The number of persons tried by jury increased from 199 to 305, and of persons so tried in whose cases the Judge disapproved the verdict of the jury from 40 to 78.

The number of witnesses examined fell from 2,435 to 2,254 and of witnesses detained for more than three days from 730 to 630.

Appellate jurisdiction. The High Court. Sessions Courts.

66. The High Court disposed of 79 appeals, all from sentences passed in the Sessions Courts. Convictions were upheld in 68, varied in 10 and reversed in one case only.

67. Five hundred eighty-two appeals involving 1,065 persons were disposed of with the result that the original sentences were confirmed in 68·7 per cent., modified in 15·1 per cent., and reversed in 14·3 per cent. of the cases. In the preceding year 660 appeals involving 1,252 persons were disposed of with the result that the original sentences were confirmed in 57·2 per cent., modified in 20·9 per cent. and reversed in 21 per cent. of the cases.

Magistrates.

68. The number of appellants whose cases were disposed of by District Magistrates fell from 394 to 261, and the proportion of sentences reversed from 26·3 to 16·4 per cent.

Revision.

69. Applications for revision of orders passed by lower courts were decided in 106 cases by the High Court, in 261 cases by the Courts of Sessions and in 144 cases by District Magistrates, reductions of 44, 131 and 44, respectively.

Receipts and charges.

70. Expenditure amounted to Rs. 4,23,983 and receipts to Rs. 2,03,725. The charges exceeded those of 1917 by Rs. 14,940 and the receipts decreased by Rs. 20,371.

Hill districts and Frontier Tracts.

71. One thousand one hundred and seventeen cases involving 1,936 persons were brought to trial in hill districts and frontier tracts against 1,056 cases involving 1,854 persons in the preceding year. One thousand two hundred and twenty-four persons were convicted and 665 were acquitted or discharged.

SECTION 5.—JAILS.

[*See* Report on the Jail Administration in the Province of Assam for the year ending the 31st December 1918, and Statistics of British India, Part VI.]

General. 72. The number of jails and sub-jails remained the same. The status of the unclassed district jail at Dhubri was raised to that of a 4th-class district jail.

Population. 73. The total number of admissions during the year rose from 11,049 to 11,750, and the daily average number of prisoners of all classes increased from 2,191 to 2,567.

Juvenile, female and literate offenders. 74. Of the 3,863 male and 77 female convicts admitted during the year, 55·74 per cent. were Hindus and Sikhs, 38·02 per cent. Muhammadans, ·20 per cent. Christians, ·05 per cent. Buddhists and Jains, and 5·99 per cent. belonged to other classes : 2·84 per cent. only could read and write.

Under-trial prisoners. 75. The daily average number of under-trial prisoners rose from 272 to 419 and the average period of detention in Magistrate's cases increased from 14·16 to 18·38 days.

Civil prisoners. 76. Sixty-four civil prisoners were admitted—a decrease of 7.

Discipline. 77. Five convicts and 6 under-trials escaped against 7 and 2, respectively, in 1917. Of these, 4 convicts and 6 under-trials were recaptured. The number of jail offences committed by convicts decreased by 126. Nineteen convicts were punished by the criminal courts. Superintendents of jails awarded 2,618 minor and 1,059 major punishments.

Health. 78. The daily average number of sick rose from 84·31 to 127·57 and the death-rate per mille of average strength from 13·23 to 21·42. The death-rate was lower than that of any other province except Bengal, where the rate was 21·3. By the end of the year accommodation was available for 3,053 prisoners—an increase of 219 beds. Increased accommodation had to be provided for prisoners concerned with *hât*-looting.

Employment. 79. 30·88 per cent. of the prisoners were employed on manufactures and 4·84 per cent. on extramural work. The average number of prisoners employed on unremunerative work increased from 29·64 to 107·63. The gross profits on the employment of convicts in manufactures rose from Rs. 70,214 to Rs. 70,910.

Finance. 80. The average cost per head of the jail population decreased from Rs. 118 to Rs. 108. The net cost of the department increased to Rs. 2,22,472 from Rs. 2,02,570. Proposals for improvement in the pay of warders were sanctioned.

SECTION 6.—CIVIL JUSTICE—PLAINS DISTRICTS.

[*See* High Court's Report on the Administration of the Civil Justice in the Province of Assam for the year ending the 31st December 1918.]

Staff. 81. The Civil Judicial staff of the province consisted of two District Judges, one Additional District Judge, nine Subordinate Judges and 28 Munsifs. The two Subordinate Judges and ten Munsifs employed in the district of Sylhet were members of the Judicial Branch of the Provincial Judicial Service, and the remainder were executive officers vested with civil judicial powers. Temporary appointments were made of two Additional Judges, one Subordinate Judge and one Munsif.

Suits. 82. The number of original suits instituted was 43,728, a decrease of 3,373, suits for money or moveables, rent suits and title or other suits being less by 1,179, 1,529 and 665, respectively. Of 54,601 suits for disposal 45,425 were disposed of and the number of cases pending at the end of the year fell from 10,239 to 9,176. The number of cases pending over one year, however, rose from 179 to 221. 17,856 suits were withdrawn or compromised, 20,278 decided *ex parte* and 7,291 after contest : 69·2 per cent. were decided in favour of the plaintiff and 23·9 per cent. in favour of the defendant, the rest being compromised.

Execution proceedings. 83. There were 28,351 applications for execution on the files against 27,729 in the preceding year, and of these 28,283 were disposed of, an increase of 2,161. Full satisfaction was obtained in 3,814 and partial satisfaction in 7,004 cases. The total amount realized was Rs. 6,77,408 as compared with Rs. 7,37,340.

Miscellaneous cases. 84. Of the cases of a judicial nature, other than suits and execution proceedings, 3,883 were instituted, 3,838 disposed of and 818 were left pending.

Appeals—(*a*) in the High Court. 85. Of the 299 appeals from decrees filed, the High Court decided 172, reversing the decree of the lower court in nine and modifying it in four cases only.

(b) in Courts Subordinate to the High Court.

86. The number of appeals before the civil appellate courts in Assam was 1,932, a decrease of 92. Of these, 1,068 were disposed of, the decisions of the lower courts being affirmed in 61·6 per cent., modified in 14·5 per cent. and reversed in 19·9 of the appeals heard.

Receipts and charges.

87. Receipts fell from Rs. 7,85,691 to Rs. 7,48,606, while expenditure rose from Rs. 2,89,771 to Rs. 3,00,355.

Hill districts and Frontier Tracts.

88. In the hill districts suits decreased in number from 1,489 to 1,161 and in value from Rs. 2,45,426 to Rs. 1,73,684.

Of the 53 appeals before the courts, 46 were disposed of. In 27 cases the order of the lower court was confirmed, in nine it was reversed and in four modified.

SECTION 7.—REGISTRATION.

[*See* Statistical returns of the Registration Department in Assam for the year ending the 31st December 1918, Report on the working of the Indian Companies Act, VII of 1913, in the province of Assam, for the year ending the 31st March 1919, and the Report on the working of the Muhammadan Marriages and Divorces Registration Act, 1876 (Bengal Act I of 1876), the Qazis Act, XII of 1880, and the Special Marriages Act, III of 1872, in the province of Assam for the year ending the 31st March 1919; Statistics of British India, Part VI.]

General.

89. The number of offices at work at the close of the year was 40 against 39 in the preceding year.

Documents.

90. The number of documents registered fell from 89,113 to 73,136, and their aggregate value decreased by Rs. 13,43,315.

Receipts and expenditure.

91. Receipts fell from Rs. 1,01,813 to Rs. 88,013 and expenditure from Rs. 68,009 to Rs. 64,983.

Muhammadan Marriages and Divorces Registration Act.

92. The number of offices at work at the close of the year was 37 as against 35 in the preceding year. The number of ceremonies registered fell from 6,011 to 5,535. The records of the Maulvi Bazar office were destroyed by fire and no figures for that office have been taken into account.

One meeting of the permanent Committee for the supervision of the Muhammadan Registrars and Qazis was held. The aggregate income of the Registrars fell from Rs. 9,588 to Rs. 8,529.

Indian Companies Act.

93. Twelve companies, limited by shares, of which six were private companies, were registered against four in the preceding year. One company went into voluntary liquidation. At the close of the year there were 69 companies limited by shares at work, with an aggregate paid-up capital of Rs. 32,71,761—an increase in capital of Rs. 5,33,813 and in numbers of eleven. Tea companies alone contributed an increase of Rs. 3,78,415. Twenty companies increased their subscribed and paid-up capital. The number of companies established outside British India but having a place of business in this province remained 145.

Provident Insurance Societies Act.

94. Three companies carried on Provident Insurance Societies business. Two of these, however, stopped issue of new policies.

SECTION 8.—MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION.

[*See* Resolution reviewing the Reports on the working of Municipalities in Assam for the year ending the 31st March 1919; Statistics of British India, Part VIII.]

Constitution.

95. There were fifteen municipalities under Act III (B.C.) of 1884 and eight unions under Act V (B.C.) of 1876. The Karimganj, Habiganj and Sunamganj Municipalities were empowered to elect their own Chairmen. The provisions of Part IX of Act III (B.C.) of 1884 were extended to the Barpeta Municipality. The number of meetings held by municipal bodies decreased from 278 to 265. The average percentage of attendance rose from 60 to 62.

Taxation.

96. The tax on holdings was in force in thirteen municipal institutions, and that on persons in the other ten. Latrine fees were paid in nineteen towns in all and water rates in six. General or partial revisions of assessment were carried out in eight municipal institutions. Latrine fees were levied for the first time in two towns. There were in all 25,160 rate-payers—a few hundred more than in 1917-18. This represents a percentage of rather over 19 on the total urban population. The average incidence of taxation per head of population rose from Rs. 2-8-4 to Rs. 2-12-11.

Income.

97. Opening balances being left out of account, the total income of municipal institutions amounted to Rs. 6,18,084, an increase of Rs. 39,654. Receipts under the head "Grants and contributions" increased from Rs. 1,20,244 to Rs. 1,25,189; of this the amount contributed by Government fell from Rs. 1,13,052 to Rs. 1,08,953.

98. Expenditure fell from Rs. 6,78,916 to Rs. 6,11,163. Repayments of loans, advances, deposits, etc., being excluded, ordinary expenditure during the year amounted to Rs. 5,90,596—a decrease of Rs. 61,651. Expenditure.

99. Capital outlay for water-supply fell from Rs. 1,12,286 to Rs. 37,699, and maintenance charges from Rs. 65,079 to Rs. 59,809. There were no water-works schemes in progress, those for Sylhet and Tezpur having been finished in 1917-18. A project for water-works at Dhubri was administratively approved. Water-supply.

100. Expenditure on public works was practically the same, *viz.*, Rs. 1,06,847. Maintenance and construction of roads cost Rs. 84,731 against Rs. 79,650. Public Works.

101. Expenditure on conservancy rose from Rs. 1,65,283 to Rs. 1,79,181, *i.e.*, from 25 to 30 per cent. of the total expenditure. Conservancy and drainage.

The conservancy system of the Shillong Municipality was improved.

The capital outlay on drainage was Rs. 8,145 against Rs. 3,414, while maintenance charges rose from Rs. 10,505 to Rs. 11,307. Small improvements were carried out in certain municipalities. Government granted Rs. 826 to the North Lakhimpur Union for raising an embankment to protect the town from floods, and the Divisional Commissioner gave Rs. 460 to the Mangaldai Union for improving the drainage of the town.

102. Municipal institutions had aggregate closing balances of Rs. 1,60,821 or Rs. 16,197 more than in 1917-18 ; the actual balance, the value of uncashed cheques being excluded, rose from Rs. 1,42,788 to Rs. 1,55,043. Grants and contributions for the Dhubri water-supply project were mainly responsible for these high figures. At the close of the year five municipalities had loans outstanding. All municipalities ended the year in a sound financial position. Financial position.

103. The accounts of fifteen municipalities and of seven unions were examined and audited by the Examiner of Local Fund Accounts. A case of embezzlement of municipal money was brought to light in the Dibrugarh Municipality. Audit.

SECTION 9.—Local Boards.

[*See* Resolution on the working of Local Boards in Assam for the year ending the 31st March 1919 ;Statistics of British India, Part VIII.]

104. The nineteen Local Boards were composed of 77 *ex-officio*, 45 nominated and 208 elected members. The North Sylhet Local Board had an elected non-official as Chairman; in all other cases the Deputy Commissioner or the Subdivisional Officer was Chairman. The total number of meetings rose from 162 to 170 and the average percentage of attendance from 63 to 65. Composition of Local Boards.

105. The aggregate opening balance of the Boards was Rs. 5,33,793. Their receipts amounted to Rs. 22,23,794 and their expenditure to Rs. 21,32,399, against Rs. 20,73,952 and Rs. 20,79,639 in the year before. The increase in income was chiefly due to larger Government grants and expansion of local rate receipts. Finance.

The Local Audit Department audited the accounts of fourteen Local Boards and of 104 Local Board dispensaries.

106. The expenditure on education rose from Rs. 7,57,003 to Rs. 7,95,673. Towards this Government raised its contribution from Rs. 3,39,737 to Rs. 4,28,333. The rates of pay of vernacular teachers were enhanced. The number of primary schools rose from 3,164 to 3,241. The work of the year. (*a*) Education.

107. The number of dispensaries maintained or aided by Boards decreased from 124 to 122. The total expenditure on medical and sanitation, exclusive of water-supply, rose from Rs. 2,83,8 2 to Rs. 3,00,462, the increase being due to the influenza epidemic. Cholera also was prevalent in epidemic form throughout the Surma Valley. With the aid of special grants from Government supplemented by funds from their own resources Boards employed temporary medical men and supplied free diet and clothing as far as possible to poor patients. Leaflets describing preventive measures against influenza were printed and distributed and medicine was issued through official and private helpers. (*b*) Medical.

108. No special grants for water-supply were made by Government and expenditure fell from Rs. 1,17,323 to Rs. 88,764. With few exceptions, the projects comprising the second year's programme of the five-year water-supply scheme undertaken in 1915-16 were completed. (*c*) Water-supply.

109. The total amount allotted by Boards for public works, including the improvement of water-supply, was Rs. 8,82,770 against Rs. 8,92,817 in the year before. Of this amount, Rs. 7,56,129 were spent. (*d*) Public Works.

PROTECTION.

(e) Veterinary.

110. The total veterinary charges fell from Rs. 24,571 to Rs. 21,970.

(f) Industrial development.

111. The Dhubri Local Board continued to support the carpentry and weaving classes attached to the Tipkai Middle English School. Two weaving demonstrators were employed by the Gauhati and one by the Jorhat Board. The Nowgong Board sent a youth to be trained in weaving at Serampur. The Sibsagar Board spent a sum of Rs. 841 on the teaching of carpentry, cane and bamboo work.

(g) Village Authorities.

112. The number of Village Authorities rose from 64 to 80. Of these, 46 were under the Gauhati and 30 under the Jorhat Board. All the Chairmen were non-officials; sixty were elected and twenty were nominated. The number of members grew from 310 to 490. Expenditure increased from Rs. 6,202 to Rs. 11,261. In Kamrup, the district in which the Gauhati Local Board is situate, enthusiasm and a spirit of self-help prevailed. The main source of income was subscriptions from the villagers themselves, but in addition free gifts were made by villagers of labour, materials (bamboo, timber, etc.) and food for workers. New paths were made and roads and tanks were improved. Judicial and other enquiries were held, disputes were arbitrated and grazing grounds and reserves were supervised. Aided by the Agricultural Department, the Gauhati Local Board began an attempt to make these Authorities the channel for agricultural improvements.

General.

113. The Boards spent 23 per cent. of their free income on education, against 31 per cent. in the preceding year. The expenditure of free money on roads and medical aid remained practically unchanged at 32 and 15 per cent., respectively.

SECTION 10.—MILITARY (INDIAN DEFENCE FORCE).

MILITARY (INDIAN DEFENCE FORCE).

[For the year ending the 31st March 1919.]

Military (Indian Defence Force.)

114. There were two Indian Defence Force Units, *viz.*, the 2nd Surma Valley Light Horse and the 6th Assam Valley Light Horse, constituted thus :—

	On 1st April 1918.	On 1st April 1919.
Officers	75	65
Rank and file	931	841

The number on the 1st April 1919 was made up as follows :—

Units.	Officers (including staff and supernumerary officers).	Rank and file.	Reservists.	
			Officers.	Rank and file.
1	2	3	4	5
2nd Surma Valley Light Horse ...	21	192	9	138
6th Assam Valley Light Horse ...	26	387	9	124
Total ...	47	579	18	262

Forty-six members joined the Indian Army Reserve of Officers and one joined the Regular Army.

CHAPTER IV.

PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

SECTION 1.—AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE.

[*See* Report of the Agricultural Department, Assam, for the period from 1st July 1918 to the 31st March 1919.]

115. The period covered by the annual report of the Department was altered from the year ending the 30th June to that ending the 31st March; consequently the present report is for a period of nine months only. The object of the change was to allow each report to cover one complete cycle of agricultural operations.

Staff.

116. Four additional Agricultural Inspectors were appointed, bringing the total number up to 11. Twenty-five demonstrators were employed during the year. The Department was considerably understaffed for the greater part of the year.

Farms.

117. The experiment in growing sugarcane on a large scale for the manufacture of white sugar was continued. The season was unfavourable for sugarcane. The crop amounted to something over 5,000 tons, of which, owing to defects in the machinery, the mills took not much more than a third. The mill-owner has transferred his interests in the plantation to a company called the Assam Sugar Estate and Factories and a leading Calcutta Firm has obtained settlement of a neighbouring tract of land for the cultivation of sugarcane. At the Jorhat Farm varieties of sugarcane are grown and tested under varying conditions. The experiments demonstrated the superiority of the selected over the local varieties of cane and the value of green manuring and of the application of phosphates. During the year 3½ lakhs of setts of the better kinds of cane chiefly from the Kamrup and Jorhat Farms were distributed to cultivators. Rice selection work was continued at the Karimganj Farm, and the acclimatizing, testing and distribution of potatoes at the Upper Shillong Farm. There was a great demand, both from the hills and plains districts, for seed potatoes from the Shillong Farm.

Shillong Fruit Farm.

118. At the Fruit Farm in Shillong the experiment of growing apples has now proved a complete success. The inhabitants of the Khasi Hills have begun to take grafts in order to open out orchards, and the Chief Commissioner looks forward to the spread of apple farming as a profitable industry among all the hill tribes of the province.

Demonstration.

119. The demonstration work done during the year was directed mainly to showing the superiority of the selected varieties of rice, sugarcane, jute and potatoes, and the advantage to be gained by the use of manure and good seed. The demonstrations undertaken in the past few years have proved that phosphate in some form will give profitable results as a manure for paddy, and also that the crop can be improved considerably at a small cost by green manuring.

Water hyacinth.

120. The measures taken to check the spread of water hyacinth were continued on a large scale. Large quantities of the weed were collected and burnt, and some 25 ton of ash were prepared. The use of the ash or of the rotted plants for manure is spreading. This is attributed to the example and demonstrations of the Agricultural officers.

Seed depôt.

121. A seed depôt was opened at Sylhet in October 1918 and the rules of business for the working in this depôt and that at Gauhati were approved and brought into operation during the year. The introduction of the system of crediting sale proceeds against expenditure resulted in a large increase in the sales of the Gauhati Depôt. A depôt was opened in Shillong for the sale of seed potatoes, and over 12 tons were sold for cash or on promise of repayment in kind.

Live-stock.

122. The policy of the Local Administration on the subject of improving the existing breeds of cattle in Assam was defined in the Resolution on the subject which was issued in October 1918. It was stated therein that the Chief Commissioner proposed to rely on the following measures:—

(1) The importation of selected *sires*, which will be entrusted either to local bodies or to tea planters and other individuals interested in cattle breeding and the improvement of the milk supply.

(2) The gradual education of the people by example and precept to understand the benefits of selective breeding and of proper feeding and keeping of cattle.

(3) The reservation of adequate grazing grounds.

(4) The introduction of suitable fodder crops and the devising of means for preserving grass and other fodder in the conditions in which the people live.

SECTION 2.—Co-operative Societies.

[*See* Report on the Working of Co-operative Societies in Assam for the year ending the 31st March 1919 ; Statistics of British India, Part II.]

Strength. 123. The number of Co-operative Societies grew from 352 to 387 and the working capital from Rs. 10,92,445 to Rs. 12,26,966, while the number of members decreased from 19,183 to 15,421. For the decrease in membership the influenza epidemic was partly responsible. There was no change in the number of unions, but the number of central banks increased from 9 to 15, of Agricultural Societies from 313 to 333 and of non-Agricultural Societies from 27 to 36.

Central banks and unions. 124. The working capital of the central banks increased from Rs. 3,90,104 to Rs. 4,29,248. Loans given to primary societies fell from Rs. 77,474 to Rs. 27,655.

Agricultural Societies. 125. The total working capital of the Agricultural Societies expanded from Rs. 4,59,774 to Rs. 5,04,616. Members' deposits declined from Rs. 81,084 to Rs. 77,333 and loans to members from Rs. 1,03,560 to Rs. 78,687.

Non-Agricultural Societies. 126. The total capital of the non-Agricultural Societies increased from Rs. 2,42,567 to Rs. 2,93,102, the deposits of members from Rs. 86,953 to Rs. 96,715 and those of non-members from Rs. 64,380 to Rs. 89,579. The societies issued Rs. 98,837 in 531 loans to their members.

Reserve funds. 127. The reserve funds of central banks increased from Rs. 19,316 to Rs. 29,012, those of Agricultural Societies from Rs. 1,04,007 to Rs. 1,52,076 and of non-Agricultural Societies from Rs. 19,166 to Rs. 22,543.

General. 128. There were at the close of the year 47 societies under liquidation, 12·1 per cent. of the total number of societies.

In order to improve the financial position of rural societies, detailed orders were issued in regard to the calculation of profits and to the building up of reserve funds.

The control of the department was transferred from the Excise Commissioner to the Director of Industries.

SECTION 3.—Weather and Crops.

[*See* Report on the Season and Crops of Assam for the year ending the 31st March 1919 ; Agricultural Statistics of British India, Vol. I, Appendix A.]

Weather. 129. The spring rains were in defect, being much lighter than usual in the Brahmaputra Valley and the northern hills ; in the Surma Valley they were normal and above the average in the eastern hills. There was abnormal rain practically in all districts, causing successive high floods which damaged the crops particularly in Sylhet and Goalpara. The rainfall in September was generally average, but the autumn and winter rains were much below normal. The subsequent weather was exceedingly dry. The total rainfall much exceeded the normal and the whole season was unfavourable.

Crops. 130. Rice was grown on an area of 4,583,140 acres, about 73 per cent. of the total cropped area, a decrease of 219,654 acres which was chiefly due to floods in Sylhet.

There was an increase in the areas sown with rape from 263,721 to 286,364 acres, with jute from 100,524 to 102,134 acres, and with crops grown for silk from 28,405 to 29,166 acres.

The areas under sugarcane, cotton, fruits and vegetables and miscellaneous crops diminished slightly.

Outturn and prices. 131. The total estimated outturn of rice fell by 641,920 tons : the exceedingly low yield was mainly due to floods, insect-pests and, in the case of winter rice, to drought. The outturn of rape and jute was poor, and of sugarcane nearly normal.

Prices rose generally during the year.

General. 132. The material condition of the agricultural population was slightly improved by the rise in prices, but this was largely set off by the decrease in outturn. There was ample seed and there was no serious loss of stock through outbreaks of cattle-disease.

SECTION 4.—Forests.

[*See* Progress Report of Forest Administration in the Province of Assam for the year ending the 30th June 1919 and Statistics of British India, Part IV (*b*), Finance and Revenue.]

Area and Settlement. 133. The total area of the reserved forests of the province at the end of the year was 5,495 square miles, an increase of 115 square miles since 1917-18 and of 1,114

square miles in the last five years. Owing to reservation and extension of cultivation the area of unclassed State forests was reduced by the close of the year to 16,309 square miles, the total decrease during the quinquennium being 2,092 square miles.

A systematic division of waste lands into those suitable and those unsuitable for reservation was in progress.

Preliminary notifications were issued for the constitution in the districts of Sibsagar and Goalpara of forests, under the management of local committees, for the use of villagers.

134. At the end of the year there were 962 square miles under working plans. Shortage of officers made it impossible to prepare new plans or to revise those which had lapsed. Twenty-three square miles of forest were surveyed in detail by the Survey of India. Working Plans.

135. Expenditure on communications was Rs. 25,589 only. The Goalpara tramway worked for 37 days, and earned a small profit. Sixty-three miles of new roads or paths were made at a cost of Rs. 13,879 and Rs. 11,710 were expended on repairs to communications. The expenditure on new buildings was Rs. 11,159 and on repairs to buildings Rs. 17,335. Communications and buildings.

136. The number of forest offences reported decreased from 987 to 876. Forest offences.

137. The Divisional Forest Officer, Sadiya, found that the grazing of buffaloes over light jungle land materially helped the regeneration of *simul* trees. The annual burning of *sal* forests introduced in 1916 proved beneficial. Natural regeneration was also helped by the cutting, over considerable areas, of climbers. Most of the existing plantations were maintained and some were extended. Sylviculture.

138. Financial results continued to improve. Revenue and expenditure rose from Rs. 13,99,147 and Rs. 6,46,877 to Rs. 15,11,439 and Rs. 7,48,951, respectively, and the surplus expanded from Rs. 7,52,270 to Rs. 7,62,488. Financial results.

139. The question of the control and regulation of the grazing of professional graziers' cattle in unclassed State forests was examined during the quinquennium, and with effect from 1st July 1917 new rules were introduced. Despite the raising of fees and the exercise of closer control there was this year a large increase in the number of such cattle. The average annual revenue from grazing more than doubled. In the year following the outbreak of war there was a marked depression in the timber trade. Though trade soon recovered, the result of this temporary depression was a falling off in the average outturn of timber, of fuel and of bamboos. In 1918-19, however, the outturn was higher than the average of this or of the preceding quinquennium. A forest lease for 30 years in the Surma Valley was granted to the Surma Valley Saw Mills Company; the lease included a condition that the Company should reserve a minimum of one lakh of tea boxes annually to meet the needs of tea gardens in the Surma Valley. The lessees have erected a large veneer plant, the first of its kind in India, for the manufacture of these boxes. The system of leasing out elephant *mahals* for two years and giving them a rest for the next eight years was found not to give elephants the protection which was intended. This system has, therefore, been given up. In future the catching of elephants in particular areas will be allowed only when it has been found by specific inquiry that the stock is sufficient. The measures taken for protection against fire in the Cachar district were successful. General.

SECTION 5.—MANUFACTURES AND MINES.

[*See* Tea Culture Report for the year ending the 31st December 1918 and Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year ending the 30th June 1919.]

140. The number of gardens increased from 796 to 814 and the area under tea from 399,690 to 405,951 acres, of which about 94 per cent. were plucked. The yield was 249,411,190 lbs. of black tea and 3,858,903 lbs. of green as compared with 242,856,597 and 2,767,319 lbs. (revised figure) in the preceding year. Green tea was manufactured in Cachar, Sylhet and Darrang. The strength of the permanent and temporary labour forces rose from 471,270 and 47,117 to 501,938 and 50,127 persons, respectively. Tea.

141. The weather was not on the whole favourable: a long spell of wet and comparatively cold weather beginning in June checked growth, and the untimely cessation of the rains in October brought the season to an early close. The districts of Cachar, Kamrup and Nowgong were specially affected and in Lakhimpur alone was the rainfall well distributed. The total fall for the year was generally above the average. Weather.

Prices.

142. Average Calcutta prices per pound for the Brahmaputra Valley were 9 annas 1 pie and for the Surma Valley 6 annas 9 pies as against 8 annas 2 pies, and 6 annas 3½ pies.

The industry prospered as was shown by the opening of new gardens and the increase in area and outturn, but the influenza epidemic began to show its effects in Kamrup and Lakhimpur before the close of the year.

Minerals.

143. The total receipts from coal and oil fell from Rs. 2,68,946 to Rs. 2,20,241. The decrease was due to reduced output consequent on the shortage of labour caused by the influenza epidemic. In the Naga Hills the Nazira Coal Company worked the Barjan coal mine and extracted 24,298 tons of coal, an increase of 15,422 tons. The value at the pit's mouth of the total output of coal in the province was Rs. 2,12,236.

SECTION 6.—FACTORIES.

[*See* Annual Report on the working of the Indian Factories Act in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and Assam for the year ending the 31st December 1918.]

144. For the purposes of the Indian Factories Act there were 15 factories at work in the province during the year, classified as follows :—

Factories.	Districts.	Number.
Printing Press	Khasi and Jaintia Hills ...	1
Railway Workshops ...	Sibsagar, Nowgong and Lakhimpur	3
Colliery Workshop	Lakhimpur	1
Petroleum refinery	Lakhimpur	1
Pottery	Lakhimpur	1
Saw Mills	Cachar, Sibsagar, Sylhet and Lakhimpur (5)	8
	Total	15

The total average daily number of operatives employed increased from 3,337 to 3,495. Of these, 2,617 were adult males, 536 adult females and 342 children. No factories were inspected during the year and no prosecutions were instituted. There were two accidents only, both classed as serious.

SECTION 7.—MARITIME TRADE.

Nil.

SECTION 8.—RAIL AND RIVER-BORNE TRADE.

[*See* Report on the Trade of Assam carried by rail and river for the year ending the 31st March 1919.]

General.

145. Imports fell from 9,843,694 mds. to 7,732,056 mds., but their value increased from Rs. 9,57,88,861 to Rs. 9,86,61,678. Exports rose from 12,822,913 mds. to 13,875,861 mds. and in value from Rs. 14,65,54,977 to Rs. 16,02,30,230.

The total trade of Assam fell from 22,666,607 mds. to 21,607,917 mds., but its value was assessed at Rs. 25,88,91,908, an increase of Rs. 1,65,48,070.

Imports.

146. The principal imports were apparel, coal and coke, manufactured cotton, grain pulse, metals and metal goods, kerosine, mustard oil, salt, betel-nuts, sugar, tobacco, manufactured wood, drugs, gunny bags and cloth, wines, spirits, opium, dried fruits, nuts and chillies. All but kerosine, salt, gunnies, wines, spirits and opium decreased. Little coal or coke was imported into the Assam Valley and it seems that the needs of this area were supplied by the local mines. The general rise in prices was reflected in the increased total value of the imports in spite of a substantial reduction in quantity: it was particularly marked in the case of manufactured cotton, of which the 148,300 mds. imported were valued at 328 lakhs of rupees, as compared with 209,094 mds. at 198 lakhs in 1916-17 and 172,382 mds. at 250 lakhs in the preceding year. Mustard oil and chillies also rose greatly in value. The amount of husked rice imported declined from 1,606,211 mds. to 305,056 mds. The manufacture of white sugar at Khagrabari in the Kamrup district accounted to some extent for the reduction in sugar imports.

Exports.

147. The principal exports arranged according to weight, were paddy, tea, timber, chalk and lime, jute, kerosine, husked rice, fresh fruits and vegetables, mustard seed, raw hides, raw cotton and lac. All but cotton, mustard seed, tea and timber increased substantially; the export of kerosine expanding from 100,168 mds. in 1916-17 to 918,614 mds., and of rice and paddy from 1,857,560 to 3,743,528 mds.

Of the total registered trade by rail and river, 51 per cent. of the imports and 62 per cent. of the exports were carried by river.

SECTION 9.—FRONTIER TRADE.

[*See* Report on the trade between the province of Assam and the adjoining foreign tribes and countries for the year ending the 31st March 1919.]

148. There was no change in the number or position of the registering stations, but the statistics of trade with Bhutan registered at Tambulpur from January to March were found to be merely a duplicate registration of the trade *viâ* Darranga and were excluded. Registration.

149. The total value of frontier trade fell from Rs. 33,34,867 to Rs. 18,44,433, imports dropping from Rs. 16,79,915 to Rs. 8,88,200 and exports from Rs. 16,54,952 to Rs. 9,56,243. The decrease was attributed to the change made in the system of registration and to the prevalence of influenza in the hills. Trade.

150. Imports and exports declined from Rs. 13,79,665 and Rs. 12,70,625 to Rs. 5,61,228 and Rs. 4,88,349, respectively. Bhutan.

151. The import trade rose from Rs. 29,490 to Rs. 54,564 and the export trade from Rs. 34,624 to Rs. 46,820. The Towang Bhutias attended the Udalguri fair in smaller numbers than usual. Towang and Charduar Bhutias.

152. The number of people coming to the plains was far below the average and imports and exports declined from Rs. 10,423 and Rs. 9,993 to Rs. 1,062 and Rs. 737, respectively. Akas and Daflas.

153. Both imports and exports rose in value, the increase being from Rs. 2,60,337 to Rs. 2,71,346 and from Rs. 3,39,710 to Rs. 4,20,337, respectively. Little of this trade was with the hill tribes. Abors, Mishmis, etc.

154. A duty of about 2 seers on every 3 maunds of rice or paddy imported by Bhutias was said to have been realised at Dirang-Zong. The Conservator of Forests levied *ad valorem* duty amounting to Rs. 112-10-6 on forest produce imported from Bhutan. A toll of 10 per cent. was levied on all hill produce auctioned in the Sadiya Bazar. General.

SECTION 10.—PUBLIC WORKS.

[*See* the Administration Report of the Public Works Department in Assam for the year ending the 31st March 1919.]

155. The total outlay amounted to Rs. 32,40,441 against Rs. 30,88,722 during the preceding year. Expenditure.

156. Quarters were under construction for the Staff Sergeant Instructors at Silchar, Srimangal and Hollicherra. Other works in hand were the Defence Works at Manipur and certain additions to the Post and Telegraph Office at Sylhet. Imperial works.

157. The most important works completed were the residence for the Deputy Conservator of Forests at Jorhat, a hostel at the Survey School, Jhalukbari, two temporary buildings for the Sylhet High School and the water-supply and certain other improvements at the Central Lunatic Asylum at Tezpur. Works in progress included the improvements to the Normal Schools at Silchar and Jorhat, the Technical School at Kohima and to the High Schools at Habiganj and Goalpara. Good progress was also made with the scheme for accommodating a battalion of the Assam Rifles in the Sadiya Frontier Tract, the estimated cost of which is 7¾ lakhs. Provincial works. (1) Buildings.

158. The outlay during the year on Original Works amounted to Rs. 2¾ lakhs. Of this, 1¾ lakhs were spent on cart roads and ½ lakh on bridges. The balance represents expenditure on bridle roads, dâk and inspection bungalows and ferries. (2) Communications.

Over 14 lakhs of rupees were spent on repairs. Four hundred and twenty-three miles of metalled roads, 1,662 miles of unmetalled roads and 2,192 miles of bridle road were maintained by this Department.

159. Work was in progress on the Pasighat water-supply and on the levelling of the Jorhat *maidan*. (3) Miscellaneous Public Improvements.

160. The High School buildings at Sunamganj were completed during the year and four timber bridges were undertaken on behalf of the Silchar Local Board. (4) Contribution Works.

161. The annual snag-clearing operations in the Desang and Ranganadi rivers were undertaken, and certain protective measures and the construction of retired *bunds* were necessitated in connection with the Desang and Dikhu *bunds*. (5) Minor Works and Navigation.

162. Owing to war conditions and the scarcity of funds and construction materials no noticeable progress in branch line construction was possible. (6) Railways and Tramways.

163. Floods were reported from most districts. Roads were submerged and some damage was done. At Maulvi Bazar many of the Government buildings were burnt down. The Circuit House at Gauhati was also burnt down. Miscellaneous.

CHAPTER V.

REVENUE AND FINANCE.

(For the year ending the 31st March 1919.)

A.—GROSS REVENUE.

164. The receipts and charges of the province are shown below :—

Receipts during 1918-19.

Heads of Accounts.	Imperial.	Provincial.	Total.
1	2	3	4
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
A.—Principal Heads of Revenue—			
I.—Land Revenue	44,39,807	44,55,632	88,95,439
II.—Opium	8,16,809	...	8,16,809
III.—Salt	832	...	832
IV.—Stamps	7,19,396	7,19,397	14,38,793
V.—Excise	...	59,27,819	59,27,819
VI.—Provincial Rates	...	34,143	34,143
VII.—Customs	1,61,807	...	1,61,807
VIII.—Income-tax	4,60,173	4,52,583	9,12,756
IX.—Forest	...	14,93,318	14,93,318
X.—Registration	...	92,855	92,855
XI.—Tributes from Native States ...	50,100	...	50,100
Total A.—Principal Heads of Revenue ...	66,48,924	1,31,75,747	1,98,24,671
B.—Interest—			
XII.—Interest	...	1,27,015	1,27,015
D.—Receipts by Civil Departments—			
XVIA.—Law and Justice—Courts of Law	...	1,42,384	1,42,384
XVIB.—Law and Justice—Jails ...	...	1,06,051	1,06,051
XVII.—Police	...	1,28,703	1,28,703
XVIII.—Ports and Pilotage	...	38	38
XIX.—Education...	...	2,36,288	2,36,288
XXA.—Medical	...	8,777	8,777
XXB.—Sanitation	...	68,316	68,316
XXIA.—Agriculture	...	13,665	13,665
XXIB.—Scientific and Miscellaneous Departments.	...	8,412	8,412
Total D.—Receipts by Civil Departments ...	...	7,12,634	7,12,634
E.—Miscellaneous Civil Receipts—			
XXII.—Receipts in aid of Superannuation	33,102	4,324	37,426
XXIII.—Stationery and Printing ...	258	5,620	5,878
XXV.—Miscellaneous	2,194	37,390	39,584
Total E.—Miscellaneous Civil Receipts ...	35,554	47,334	82,888
H.—Railways—			
XXVI.—State Railways (Gross Receipts)	...	1,21,536	1,21,536
Deduct—Working Expenses ...	...	1,17,079	1,17,079
Net Railway Receipts	...	4,457	4,457
J.—Irrigation—			
XXX.—Minor Works and Navigation—Public Works	...	...	...
K.—Other Public Works—			
XXXI.—Civil Works—Civil ...	...	60,931	60,931
Ditto—Public Works ...	1,069	1,46,995	1,48,064
Total K.—Other Public Works	1,069	2,07,926	2,08,995
Military Receipts—			
XXXIV.—Military Works	7,918	...	7,918
Transfer between Imperial and Provincial ...	—41,68,510	+41,68,510	...
Grand Total	25,24,955	1,84,43,623	2,09,68,578

Expenditure during 1918-19.

Heads of Accounts.	Imperial.	Provincial.	Total.
1	2	3	4
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
A.—Direct demands on the Revenue—			
1.—Refunds and Drawbacks ...	88,818	31,439	1,20,257
2.—Assignments and Compensations ...	32,354	25,685	58,039
3.—Land Revenue	...	15,39,315	15,39,315
5.—Salt	880	...	880
6.—Stamps	23,409	23,409	46,818
7.—Excise	...	2,37,087	2,37,087
8.—Provincial Rates	...	...	...
10.—Income-tax	2,172	2,172	4,344
11.—Forest	...	6,90,961	6,90,961
12.—Registration	...	67,789	67,789
Total A.—Direct demands on the Revenue	1,47,633	26,17,857	27,65,490
B.—Interest—			
13.—Interest on Ordinary Debt ...	...	1,46,720	1,46,720
14.—Interest on other Obligations. { Civil ...	48,862	...	48,862
{ Public Works ...	...	...	...
Total B.—Interest	48,862	1,46,720	1,95,582
D.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments—			
18.—General Administration ...	1,62,163	6,05,354	7,67,517
19A.—Law and Justice—Courts of Law ...	...	10,92,628	10,92,628
19B.—Law and Justice—Jails ...	...	3,42,886	3,42,886
20.—Police	...	42,98,235	42,98,235
21.—Ports and Pilotage	...	75,803	75,803
22.—Education	...	16,09,935	16,09,935
23.—Ecclesiastical	24,694	...	24,694
24A.—Medical	...	6,00,248	6,00,248
24B.—Sanitation	...	2,56,548	2,56,548
25.—Political	...	5,09,765	5,09,765
26A.—Agriculture	...	3,11,273	3,11,273
26B.—Scientific and Miscellaneous Departments.	1,598	1,14,026	1,15,624
Total D.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments.	1,88,455	98,16,701	1,00,05,156
E.—Miscellaneous—			
27.—Territorial and Political Pensions ...	8,301	...	8,301
28.—Civil Furlough and Absentee Allowances	121	...	121
29.—Superannuation Allowances and Pensions	3,789	3,37,995	3,41,784
30.—Stationery and Printing ...	563	1,43,311	1,43,874
32.—Miscellaneous	54,200	4,34,131	4,88,331
Total E.—Miscellaneous ...	66,974	9,15,437	9,82,411
33.—Famine Relief	48	16	64
H.—Railway Revenue Accounts—			
40.—Subsidised Companies	...	5,112	5,112
41.—Miscellaneous Railway Expenditure...	...	327	327
Total H.—Railways	...	5,439	5,439
J.—Irrigation—			
43.—Minor Works and Navigation. { Civil ...	...	...	...
{ Public Works ...	...	31,376	31,376
Total J.—Irrigation	...	31,376	31,376
K.—Other Public Works—			
44.—Construction of Railways ...	...	—20,950	—20,950
45.—Civil Works { Civil ...	...	2,53,535	2,53,535
{ Public Works ...	66,301	29,96,426	30,62,727
Total K.—Other Public Works ...	66,301	32,29,011	32,95,312
L.—Military Works Services—			
47.—Military Works { Ordinary ...	59,750	...	59,750
{ Special ...	9,037	...	9,037
Total L.—Military Works Services...	68,787	...	68,787
Grand Total ...	5,87,060	1,67,62,557	1,73,49,617

Abstract of Receipts and Expenditure during 1918-19.

Heads.	1917-18.			1918-19.			1918-19 compared with 1917-18.			
	Receipts.	Expenditure.	Net receipts and net expenditure.	Receipts.	Expenditure.	Net receipts and net expenditure.	Increase of revenue.	Decrease of revenue.	Increase of expenditure.	Decrease of expenditure.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
I. Principal Heads of Revenue	1,81,67,740	26,08,603	+1,55,59,137	1,98,24,671	27,65,490	+1,70,59,181	16,56,931	...	1,56,887	...
II. Departmental Heads—										
Interest	1,24,488	2,02,968	—78,480	1,27,015	1,95,532	—68,567	2,527	...	...	7,386
Civil Departments ...	7,10,388	77,65,803	—70,55,415	7,12,634	1,00,05,156	—92,92,522	2,246	...	22,39,353	...
Miscellaneous	66,864	9,40,749	—8,73,885	82,888	9,82,411	—8,99,523	16,024	...	41,662	...
Famine Relief and Insurance.	...	17,549	—17,549	...	64	—64	...	...	...	17,485
Railway Revenue Accounts	1,36,724	1,28,821	+ 7,903	1,21,536	1,01,567	+19,969	...	15,188	...	27,254
Irrigation	...	30,333	—30,333	...	31,376	—31,376	...	...	1,043	...
Other Public Works ...	2,18,131	31,25,493	—29,07,362	2,08,995	33,16,262	—31,07,267	...	9,136	1,90,769	...
Military Works Services ...	6,451	34,801	—28,350	7,918	68,787	—60,869	1,467	...	33,986	...
Total Departmental Heads ...	12,63,046	1,22,46,517	—1,09,83,471	12,60,986	1,47,01,205	—1,34,40,219	...	2,060	24,54,688	...
Grand Total	1,94,30,786	1,48,55,120	+45,75,666	2,10,85,657	1,74,66,695	+ 36,18,962	16,54,871	...	26,11,575	...

3.—Land Revenue.

165. The expenditure of the year compares as follows with that of 1917-18, and with the budget estimate for 1918-19 :—

Minor heads.	1918-19 compared with 1917-18.		1918-19 compared with the budget estimate.	
	Increase.	Decrease.	Excess.	Savings.
1	2	3	4	5
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Charges of District Administration ...	...	1,000	...	7,000
2. Management of Government Estates ...	2,000	...	1,000	...
3. Charges on account of Land Revenue collections...	28,000	...	4,000	...
4. Charges on account of Fishery collections ...	...	...	...	2,000
5. Survey and Settlement	...	83,000	...	28,000
6. Land Records	1,000	...	...	10,000
7. Allowances to District and Village officers ...	...	...	...	1,000

The decrease under "Charges of District Administration" was due to savings under the salary and establishment heads. The increase under "Charges on account of Land Revenue collections" occurred on account of advance collection of land

revenue and the payment of last *kists* by mauzadars before the close of the year. Smaller outlay on settlement and survey operations accounts for the decrease under "Survey and Settlement," while the saving under "Land Records" as compared with the budget was due to decreased expenditure on grain compensation allowance for the Kanungo establishment.

166. The details by minor heads of the actuals and estimates under this head are shown below in round figures :— 18.—General Administration.

Minor heads.	Actuals, 1917-18.	Budget, 1918-19.	Actuals, 1918-19.	Comparison with the actuals of 1917-18.	Comparison with the budget of 1918-19.
1	2	3	4	5	6
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Salary of Chief Commissioner	58,000	58,000	62,000	+ 4,000	+ 4,000
Sumptuary allowance of Chief Commissioner ...	6,000	6,000	6,000	...	...
Staff and Household of Chief Commissioner ...	31,000	35 000	31,000	...	— 4,000
Expenditure from Contract allowance ...	6,000	7,000	8,000	+ 2,000	+ 1,000
Tour expenses	14,000	22,000	15,000	+ 1,000	— 7,000
Legislative Council	11,000	14,000	13,000	+ 2,000	— 1,000
Civil Secretariat	2,12,000	2,12,000	2,00,000	— 12,000	— 12,000
Commissioners	1,43,000	1,43,000	1,56,000	+13,000	+ 13,000
Civil offices of Account and Audit—					
Imperial	1,56,000	1,62.000	1,62,000	+ 6,000	...
Provincial	30,000	34,000	29,000	— 1,000	— 5,000
Inspector General of Registration, etc. ...	44,000	46,000	40,000	— 4,000	— 6,000
Director of Land Records and Agriculture ...	51,000	49,000	46,000	— 5,000	— 3,000
Total	7,62,000	7,88,000	7,68,000	+ 6,000	— 20,000

The increase under "Salary of Chief Commissioner" was due to the payment of the transit pay of the incoming and the subsidiary leave allowance of the retiring Chief Commissioner. Under "Staff and Household of Chief Commissioner" the decrease as compared with the budget was mainly due to savings under the salary and establishment heads.

The increase under "Commissioners" was due to larger outlay under the salary and contingent heads and on dockyard charges incurred in overhauling the steam launch of the Commissioner, Assam Valley Division. Under the head "Civil offices of Account and Audit (Imperial)" the excess occurred on account of larger expenditure on establishment and travelling allowance, while under "Civil offices of Account and Audit (Provincial)" smaller outlay on salary and travelling allowance of the Examiner of Local Fund Accounts accounted for the decrease. Smaller outlay on salaries, establishment and contingencies was the reason for the decrease under the heads "Inspector General of Registration, etc.," "Director of Land Records and Agriculture" and "Civil Secretariat."

B.—IMPERIAL REVENUE AND FINANCE.

SECTION 1.—Land Revenue.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year ending the 30th June 1919.]

167. The land revenue demand aggregated Rs. 88,17,714, of which Rs. 79,80,320 were on current account and Rs. 8,37,394 were arrears. In spite of the remission of Rs. 1,03,088 arrears still equalled nearly 10 per cent. of the annual demand and in Sylhet were about half the annual demand. These heavy arrears were due in part to bad seasons, and partly to the tendency of the Sylhet revenue payer to wait until coercive measures are taken. The collections throughout the province were little less than the annual demand. The percentage of total collection on total demand was Land revenue.

90·40 against 89·63 per cent. in 1917-18. The year closed with a net balance of Rs. 7,42,883 against Rs. 8,32,453 in the preceding year. The demand on account of miscellaneous land revenue fell from Rs. 9,15,123 to Rs. 8,72,958, of which Rs. 8,30,374 were collected and Rs. 7,226 remitted.

SECTION 2.—SOURCES OF REVENUE OTHER THAN LAND REVENUE.

[*See* Report of the Salt Department in the district of Sylhet for the year ending the 31st March 1919, Report on the Administration of the Excise Department in Assam for the year ending the 31st March 1919, Statistics of the Stamp Department for the year ending the 31st March 1919 and Statistical Return of the working of the Income-tax Act, VII of 1918, in the Province of Assam for the year ending the 31st March 1919.]

Salt. 168. The only salt ware-house in the province is situated at Ajmiriganj in the district of Sylhet. The quantity of salt imported during the year was 25,400 maunds against 12,700 maunds in the preceding year, while 16,477 maunds were actually cleared against 16,261 maunds in 1917-18. The wholesale and retail prices ranged from Rs. 3-4-0 to Rs. 3-8-0 and from Rs. 4-6-0 to Rs. 5-0-0, the figures for the previous year being Rs. 4-6-0 to Rs. 7-4-0 and Rs. 5 to Rs. 10, respectively. In order to check the abnormal rise in the price of salt, advantage was taken of the powers vested in the Local Administration under the Defence of India (Consolidation) Rules, 1915, and maximum retail prices were fixed at two annas per seer for Sylhet and Cachar, at two annas and three pies per seer for all districts in the Assam Valley Division except Goalpara and the Garo Hills for which the price was fixed at two annas and six pies, and at two annas and nine pies for the districts of the Lushai and the Khasi and Jaintia Hills.

Excise receipts and charges. 169. Excise revenue under all heads rose from Rs. 53,71,664 to Rs. 59,27,798 This increase (of 8·8 per cent.) was due partly to increase in consumption and partly to enhancement of duty on country spirit and opium. Of the total demand recoverable during the year all but Rs. 574 was realised. Expenditure increased from Rs. 1,40,217 to Rs. 2,61,374.

Country spirit. 170. The consumption of country spirit rose by 24,886 L. P. gallons or by 12·4 per cent. and revenue expanded from Rs. 14,61,063 to Rs. 16,80,797. The rate of duty was raised to Rs. 4-6-0 and the cost price reduced to Re. 1-2-0 per L. P. gallon. 178 shops were licensed—an increase of one. There was no change in the area in which the outstill system was in force.

Ganja. 171. The number of licenses issued for the retail sale of *ganja* was reduced from 233 to 231. Consumption increased by 55 maunds or by 9·6 per cent. and receipts by Rs. 28,969 or by 3·97 per cent.

Opium. 172. The number of retail licenses issued for the sale of opium during the year was reduced from 339 to 330. Consumption increased by 59 maunds or by 3·9 per cent. and revenue rose from Rs. 31,48,144 to Rs. 33,91,522.

General. 173. The policy of reducing the number of stills and enhancing the still fees in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills was further pursued with good results. A system of registration of opium-eaters was introduced in the Sadiya Frontier Tract. Local bodies were consulted in matters of general local importance connected with the administration of the department and in regard to the sites for new shops and the removal of sites of the existing shops.

The excise policy of the Administration was defined as the pursuit of three moral objects—first, to prevent all forms of smuggling; secondly, to discourage all forms of vice, drunkenness and excess; and, thirdly, to give reasonable facilities to moderate consumers, particularly the working classes, to obtain a little wholesome refreshment after their day's work. In view of the all-round increase in consumption, the Chief Commissioner decided that, with effect from April 1920, country liquor shops shall be closed until noon and at 6 P.M. in winter and 7 P.M. in summer. On Sundays and holidays the hour of closing will be 4 P.M. As regards *ganja*, the duty will be raised from Rs. 16 to Rs. 20 a seer, and the minimum retail price from 6 to 8 annas a tola. In order to check the growth of the opium habit, the feasibility of registering opium consumers will be explored.

Stamps. 174. Receipts under the Stamp and Court-Fees Acts rose from Rs. 13,95,948 to Rs. 14,17,825 and charges from Rs. 34,542 to Rs. 35,196.

The number of stamp vendors increased from 350 to 358 and the amount of discount earned by them rose from Rs. 24,855 to Rs. 26,145. Courts, civil and revenue, in all dealt with 1,061 cases of insufficiently stamped or unstamped instruments and levied duty and penalty of Rs. 6,982, a slight decrease on the figures of the preceding year.

Income-tax. 175. Income-tax receipts rose from Rs. 8,29,996 to Rs. 9,07,910, and the number of assessees from 5,954 to 7,071.

SECTION 3.—PROVINCIAL FINANCE.

716. (*For the year ending the 31st March* 1919.)

Year.	Opening balance.	Receipts.	Expenditure.	Closing balance.
1	2	3	4	5
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1917-18 ...	21,20,213	1,49,40,556	1,43,29,235	27,31,534
1918-19 ...	27,31,534	1,84,43,623	1,67,62,557	44,12,600

The budget estimate for 1918-19 provided for an opening balance of Rs. 24,64,000' receipts amounting to Rs. 1,59,99,000, expenditure amounting to Rs. 1,57,00,000 and the closing balance to Rs. 26,73,000.

177. Provincial receipts were better than the budget by Rs. 25,35,000. The increase was mainly due to the net assignment from Imperial revenues being actually higher by Rs. 19,39,000 owing to an assignment of Rs. 20,95,000 from Imperial to Provincial on account of expenditure incurred during 1917-18 and 1918-19 on operations against the Kukis. Receipts.

178. The expenditure was higher than the budget estimate by Rs. 10,63,000. The excess was due to an outlay of Rs. 20,10,000 on the operations against the Kukis for which no provision had been made in the budget. Excluding this expenditure there was a saving of Rs. 9,47,000 which was mainly due to general curtailment of expenditure, to smaller outlay on Public Works in the North-East Frontier and to large savings from lump provisions in the Education budget. Expenditure.

179. The opening balance of Rs. 27,31,534 included Rs. 9,86,000 in the shape of unspent balances of ear-marked grants given by the Government of India for education, sanitation, police and for the development of the province and also Rs. 5,50,000 representing the unspent balance of an assignment of Rs. 8,00,000 made for general purposes. Similarly the closing balance included Rs. 11,08,000 on account of ear-marked grants besides the unspent balance of the grant of Rs. 8,00,000 for discretionary purposes. Assignments.

SECTION 4.—LOCAL FUNDS.

[For the year ending the 31st March 1919.]

180. The following statements show the receipts and charges of the year of those Local Funds of which an account is submitted to Government :—

(A)

Statement showing the income, expenditure and balances of Local Boards and District Funds in Assam during the year 1918-19.

Serial No.	Names of Local Boards and District Funds.	Opening balance.	Receipts.	Total.	Payment.	Closing balance.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1	Silchar Local Board	21,070 12 7	1,51,095 14 2	1,72,166 10 9	1,37,574 3 9	34,592 7 0
2	Hailakandi „ ...	29,233 11 8	67,379 13 2	96,613 8 10	66,708 6 1	29,905 2 9
3	Tezpur „ ...	39,122 11 10	1,05,870 7 10	1,44,993 3 8	1,14,984 14 2	30,008 5 6
4	Mangaldai „ ...	29,843 12 1	81,035 3 1	1,10,878 15 2	76,288 6 4	34,590 8 10
5	Dhubri „ ...	97,104 5 5	1,84,886 0 3	2,81,990 5 8	2,08,275 10 0	73,714 11 8
6	Goalpara „ ...	19,899 10 8	77,484 10 1	97,384 4 9	72,761 5 7	24,622 15 2
7	Gauhati „ ...	56,264 5 3	1,79,501 5 8	2,35,765 10 11	1,62,388 15 11	73,376 11 0
8	Barpeta „ ...	16,944 4 10	67,273 4 7	84,217 9 5	57,168 15 2	27,048 10 3
9	Dibrugarh „ ...	49,480 14 8	1,36,004 8 3	1,85,485 6 11	1,43,812 7 7	41,762 15 4
10	North Lakhimpur Local Board.	26,263 14 9	72,889 12 10	99,153 11 7	70,798 15 8	28,354 11 11
11	Nowgong Local Board...	24,456 7 4	1,15,822 15 0	1,40,279 6 4	1,00,334 14 7	39,944 7 9
12	Jorhat „ ...	42,617 4 6	1,14,945 1 6	1,57,562 6 0	1,04,337 4 3	53,225 1 9
13	Sibsagar „ ...	23,528 8 8	1,15,316 12 8	1,38,845 5 4	1,09,922 8 6	28,922 12 10
14	Golaghat „ ...	21,573 10 3	72,647 14 3	94,231 8 6	80,337 4 6	13,884 4 0
15	North Sylhet „ ...	336 2 0*	1,43,743 4 4	1,43,407 2 4	1,34,414 14 2	8,992 4 2
16	Sunamganj „ ...	9,593 14 10	1,12,918 5 2	1,22,512 4 0	1,07,299 1 11	15,213 2 1
17	Karimganj „ ...	13,002 9 7	1,30,162 6 10	1,43,165 0 5	1,19,525 2 9	23,639 13 8
18	Habiganj „ ...	7,937 11 7	1,34,577 1 11	1,42,514 13 6	1,28,010 12 10	14,504 0 8
19	South Sylhet „ ...	6,191 8 11	1,43,941 7 8	1,50,133 0 7	1,21,157 5 3	28,975 11 4
	Total ...	5,33,794 1 5	22,07,496 5 3	27,41,290 6 8	21,16,101 9 0	6,25,188 13 8
20	Garo Hills District Fund.	5,127 3 7	9,372 8 9	14,499 12 4	8,882 0 6	5,617 11 10

* Represents the overdraft permitted by the Local Administration in letter No. 1330M., dated the 4th March 1918, during 1917-18.

(B)

Statement showing the income, expenditure and balances of Municipalities and Unions in Assam during the year 1918-19.

Serial No.	Names of Municipalities.	Opening balance.	Receipts.	Total.	Payments.	Closing balance.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1	Silchar Municipality ...	8,878 5 4	52,102 11 10	60,981 1 2	48,431 6 0	12,549 11 2
2	Hailakandi Union ...	5,213 11 10	4,906 11 9	10,120 7 7	5,974 7 10	4,145 15 9
3	Tezpur Municipality ...	5,421 8 6	43,355 12 3	48,777 4 9	42,073 10 0	6,703 10 9
4	Mangaldai Union ...	3,980 11 10	6,196 6 0	10,177 1 10	3,708 8 0	6,468 9 10
5	Dhubri Municipality ...	21,753 13 8	38,560 6 1	60,314 3 9	27,665 0 8	32,649 3 1
6	Gouripur Union ...	...	...	...	...	...
7	Goalpara Municipality...	1,905 9 1	16,069 1 2	17,974 10 3	15,070 15 9	2,903 10 6
8	Gauhati ,, ...	10,716 12 2	1,01,059 6 1	1,11,776 2 3	1,03,376 8 6	8,399 9 9
9	Barpeta ,, ...	8,824 3 8	19,980 9 3	28,804 12 11	21,671 3 0	7,133 9 11
10	Shillong ,, ...	9,679 2 1	88,624 8 0	98,303 10 1	80,043 9 5	18,260 0 8
11	Dibrugarh ,, ...	1,137 14 9	63,355 7 1	64,493 5 10	51,904 0 8	12,589 5 2
12	North Lakhimpur Union	4,524 11 4	6,757 6 9	11,282 2 1	5,304 4 10	5,977 13 3
13	Nowgong Municipality...	5,706 15 0	21,776 4 10	27,483 3 10	22,958 1 9	4,525 2 1
14	Jorhat ,, ...	6,586 15 4	33,618 10 11	40,205 10 3	34,730 13 3	5,474 13 0
15	Sibsagar ,, ...	3,475 4 5	20,307 13 1	23,783 1 6	20,367 12 2	3,415 5 4
16	Golaghat Union ...	5,380 11 3	10,556 14 10	15,937 10 1	9,844 0 8	6,093 9 5
17	Nazira ,, ...	2,331 11 0	3,743 1 3	6,074 12 3	5,167 9 1	907 3 2
18	North Sylhet Municipality.	33,411 11 2	48,584 13 7	81,996 8 9	70,720 9 1	11,275 15 8
19	Sunamganj Municipality	5,506 1 11	10,311 6 0	15,817 7 11	11,969 12 11	3,847 11 0
20	Karimganj ,, ...	714 8 11	13,372 7 0	14,086 15 11	12,925 1 11	1,161 14 0
21	Habiganj ,, ...	4,086 6 5	15,677 1 9	19,763 8 2	16,538 6 0	3,225 2 2
22	Maulvi Bazar Union ...	873 10 9	6,812 10 6	7,686 5 3	5,550 8 9	2,135 12 6
	Total ...	1,50,110 8 5	6,25,729 10 0	7,75,840 2 5	6,15,996 6 3	1,59,843 12 2

(C)

Statement showing the income, expenditure and balances of Town and Bazar Funds in Assam during the year 1918-19.

Serial No.	Names of Funds.	Opening balance.	Receipts.	Total.	Payments.	Closing balance.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1	Haflong Bazar Fund	4,389 15 0	11,316 10 6	15,706 9 6	7,922 1 10	7,784 7 8
2	Jowai Town Fund	695 13 2	1,339 6 0	2,035 3 2	1,233 11 4	801 7 10
3	Sadiya Local Fund	12,282 11 0	19,443 1 2	31,725 12 2	21,736 5 0	9,989 7 2
4	Imphal Town Fund	1,153 11 3	15,320 8 3	16,474 3 6	14,724 5 5	1,749 14 1
	Total	18,522 2 5	47,419 9 11	65,941 12 4	45,616 7 7	20,325 4 9

(D)

Statement showing the income, expenditure and balance of Cantonment Funds. Chaukidari Reward Funds and Assam Williamson Education Fund during the year 1918-19.

Names of Funds.	Opening balance.	Receipts.	Total.	Payments.	Closing balance.
1	2	3	4	5	6
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
(a) CANTONMENT FUNDS.					
Shillong Cantonment Fund ...	4,617 14 10	13,753 1 4	18,371 0 2	15,385 0 1	2,986 0 1
Dibrugarh Cantonment Fund ...	469 12 9	2,095 5 7	2,565 2 4	2,145 13 6	419 4 10
Total	5,087 11 7	15,848 6 11	20,936 2 6	17,530 13 7	3,405 4 11
(b) DISTRICT CHAUKIDARI REWARD FUNDS.					
Cachar	1,037 13 0	997 4 0	2,035 1 0	1,053 6 6	981 10 6
Goalpara	12,073 3 4	668 3 9	12,741 7 1	442 13 0	12,298 10 1
Sylhet	12,075 11 3	4,208 6 9	16,284 2 0	4,957 3 0	11,326 15 0*
Total	25,186 11 7	5,873 14 6	31,060 10 1	6,453 6 6	24,607 3 7
(c) ASSAM WILLIAMSON EDUCATION FUND.	3,839 8 5	4,546 11 4	8,386 3 9	6,270 13 9	2,115 6 0

* As per administrator's certificate the balance is Rs. 11,322-15-0. The difference of Rs. 4 will be reconciled during the current year.

SECTION 5.—LOCAL RATES.

[*See* Resolution on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam for the year ending the 30th June 1919.]

181. The current demand, inclusive of arrears, for the whole province rose from Rs. 9,95,784 to Rs. 10,29,063. Of this, Rs. 9,01,924 were collected and Rs. 5,271 remitted. In the Assam Valley the current demand showed an increase from Rs. 5,58,947 to Rs. 5,65,477 corresponding to the increase in the land revenue demand. In the Surma Valley the current demand was Rs. 3,32,616 including an increase of Rs. 13,066 in Cachar and of Rs. 16,800 in Sylhet. The increase in Cachar was due to resettlement and that in Sylhet to the revision of assessment in the Sunamganj subdivision and the resettlement of the Jaintia parganas. The current collections for the whole province amounted to Rs. 7,93,414 or 88·21 per cent. of the demand as compared with 87·81 per cent. in the year before. Local rates.

SECTION 6.—EDUCATIONAL CESSES.

Nil.

SECTION 7.—MUNICIPAL REVENUE.

182. The subject of municipal income and expenditure is discussed in Section 8, Chapter III of this Report.

CHAPTER VI.

SECTION 1.—VITAL STATISTICS.

[*See* Annual Sanitary Report of the province of Assam for the year ending the 31st December 1918.]

General. 183. The provincial vital statistics are based on a population of 6,051,507 in the plains districts. General conditions were not unfavourable to health and there was an increase in the birth-rate from 31·35 to 34·98 per mille. Assam, however, did not escape the general epidemic of influenza. Its first appearance, in July, was in a mild form. In October, there was a virulent attack throughout most of the province. This was at its height during November, and subsided to a considerable extent by the end of December. The recorded provincial death-rate rose from 27·09 per mille for the year 1917 and 27·36 for the preceding quinquennium to 46·10. Though Assam was less unfortunate than most provinces in India, it would seem that the disease, within four months, took toll of a hundred thousand lives.

In tea estates the birth-rate rose from 31·10 to 35·41 per mille and the death-rate from 30·41 to 55·23.

The ratio of mortality during the year from the chief diseases was 26·25 from fever, 8·06 from respiratory diseases, 2·32 from cholera and 2·07 from dysentery and diarrhœa as compared with 14·91, ·67, 2·70 and 2·49, respectively, in the preceding ten years. Many deaths due to influenza were attributed to fevers and respiratory diseases, while it is possible that some cases of influenza of a gastro-intestinal type were entered as cholera.

Registration. 184. Increased attention was paid by the vaccination staff to the work of inspecting village registers of vital statistics.

Hill Districts. 185. Vital statistics recorded in hill districts are given in the following table :—

Districts.	Birth-rate.		Death-rate.	
	1917.	1918.	1917.	1918.
1	2	3	4	5
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	28·02	27·45	24·36	55·72
Naga Hills	16·77	15·46	19·60	47·71
Lushai Hills	40·76	40·43	31·75	35·55
Garo Hills	27·96	25·64	21·11	34·99

SECTION 2.—IMMIGRATION AND LABOUR INSPECTION.

[*See* Resolution on Immigrant Labour in Assam for the year ending the 30th June 1919.]

Immigration. 186. The number of immigrants was the highest on record for many years. The increase was chiefly due to the existence of scarcity in recruiting districts, and to the stoppage of the abnormal demand for labour for war purposes.

Mortality among immigrants on transit was unusually high. The number of deaths was 1,485 against 7 in the preceding year, 665 being due to cholera. Conditions in the recruiting districts predisposed immigrants to illness. Outbreaks of cholera and of influenza were the result. The Assam Labour Board and the Tea Districts Labour Supply Association aided by the Sanitary Department did what they could to meet the situation. Eventually arrangements were made for inoculation with cholera vaccine of all coolies before they left the recruiting districts. Expenditure was freely incurred on quarantine camps, on proper dietary and on the employment of the necessary staff.

Immigrant population. 187. By the end of the year the total strength of the labour force had risen to 1,084,957, an increase of 144,589. The number of labourers under Act VI of 1901, whose contracts had not expired at the close of year, was 117. The birth-rate fell from 23·8 to 24 per mille calculated on the total strength of the coolie population.

The death-rate per mille of the total labour force increased from 23·2 to 61·4 per mille. Influenza exacted a heavy toll, and added to influenza was cholera, while in certain areas malaria was particularly rife.

There were only six cases of fraudulent and irregular recruitment. On investigation only two of these cases were found to be true. Four coolies were repatriated against nine in the preceding year.

Two complaints of ill-treatment were made by coolies against Managers; both were found to be frivolous and were decided against the complainants. There were nine cases of unlawful assembly or rioting, including one case pending from the previous year, and one case of assault. Thirty-six persons were sentenced to imprisonment in these cases.

The relations between planters and neighbouring villagers were reported generally satisfactory. At the close of the year the area of Government land held by coolies as tenants was 252,247 acres. They also held 32,967 acres of land as sub-tenants. The area of Government land settled with managers on special and ordinary leases to enable them to provide their coolies with cultivation was 18,613 acres.

The average monthly wages (calculated on the figures for September 1918 and March 1919 of monthly cash wages including *ticca*, diet rations, subsistence allowance and bonus for the total number of labourers on the books) were for men Rs. 6-5-9, for women Rs. 5-1-5 and for children Rs. 3-1-5. The corresponding figures for the preceding year were Rs. 6-4-3, Rs. 5-1-2 and Rs. 2-13-5. Calculated on the average daily working strength the figures were :—

	1917-18.	1918-19.
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
For men	7 15 9	8 6 0
For women	6 10 2	7 3 5
For children	4 0 2	4 4 8

SECTION 3.—CHARITABLE DISPENSARIES.

[*See* the Annual Report on the working of the Dispensaries in Assam for the year ending the 31st December 1918.]

Dispensaries.

188. At the end of the year there were 194 hospitals and dispensaries, of which 68 were supported by the State, 110 by local bodies and 16 by private persons, missions and railways: 16 were closed during the year owing to shortage of medical officers. Four Civil Assistant Surgeons and 8 Sub-Assistant Surgeons were deputed to military duty, making a total of 14 Civil Assistant Surgeons and 51 Sub-Assistant Surgeons since the beginning of the war. In addition, 26 Sub-Assistant Surgeons were employed on the Kuki operations. The number of patients treated fell from 1,497,526 to 1,463,411. 20·55 of the population obtained medical relief in the "State-public," "local fund" and "private-aided" dispensaries. 9,070 in-patients were treated—an increase of 549: the rate of mortality among them rose from 7·56 to 11·64 per cent., influenza alone accounting for 243 deaths. 74,816 persons were given out-treatment for influenza.

The total income was Rs. 5,15,907, of which Rs. 1,94,640 were contributed by Government, and the total expenditure during the year was Rs. 3,87,317 against Rs. 4,05,991 in 1917.

Leper Asylum.

189. There were 51 patients in the leper asylum at Sylhet at the beginning of the year, 50 were admitted during the year, 16 discharged, 16 absconded and 17 died. The total expenditure was Rs. 4,309.

In the Kohima leper hospital, maintained at a cost of Rs. 1,406, there were 22 patients at the beginning and 18 at the close of the year.

SECTION 4.—LUNATIC ASYLUM.

[*See* the Annual Report on the Lunatic Asylum for the year ending the 31st December 1918.]

Population.

190. The average number of lunatics under confinement increased from 341 to 377. During the year 37 were discharged cured, 9 were made over to their friends as improved, 8 were discharged otherwise than cured and 22 died. A temporary ward for 26 inmates was constructed.

Health.

191. Although the total number of admissions to hospital rose from 122 to 195 and the number of deaths from 19 to 22, the death-rate was the lowest in India, *viz.*, 5·84 per cent. reckoned on the daily average strength.

Cost of maintenance.

192. Expenditure rose from Rs. 73,121 to Rs. 74,069 and the average cost per head fell to Rs. 197 from Rs. 214. Persons employed in manufactures made a profit on an average of Rs. 46 each, and the average cost of diet fell from Rs. 88 to Rs. 80 a head.

SECTION 5.—SANITATION.

[*See* Annual Sanitary Report of the province of Assam for the year ending the 31st December 1918.]

Medical.

193. The sale of quinine "treatments" continued to decrease.

At Pasighat, Haflong and Lumding an anti-malarial campaign was in progress. The campaign against *kala-azar* was prosecuted vigorously. A detailed survey of the areas affected or likely to be affected was undertaken and operations undertaken in Sibsagar gave promising results. Statistics show that the disease was generally kept in hand, but it showed a tendency to spread in the Garo Hills.

SECTION 6.—VACCINATION.

[*See* Annual Vaccination Returns of the province of Assam for the year ending the 31st March 1919.]

Operations.

194. The total number of vaccination operations performed by all agencies during the year was 289,184, a decrease of 65,139 operations, which was ascribed to the employment of the staff in combating the influenza epidemic, to the detriment of vaccination work. In Kamrup there was a high rate of mortality from small-pox, but the general rate was below that of the preceding decennium.

48·09 per cent. of the infants available for vaccination in compulsory areas were successfully vaccinated.

The total cost of the Department, including that of the lymph prepared at the Shillong Vaccine Depôt, was Rs. 58,247-4-5, an increase of Rs. 3,246-8-7.

Proposals were made for strengthening the staff of vaccinators.

SECTION 7.—BACTERIOLOGICAL AND PASTEUR VACCINE INSTITUTE.

[*See* the Annual Report on the King Edward VII Memorial Pasteur Institute for the year ending the 31st December 1918.]

Bacteriological and Pasteur Vaccine Institute.

195. The volume of anti-rabic, routine laboratory and office work nearly doubled. One thousand and ninety-one persons commenced and 1,068 underwent the full course of anti-rabic treatment: of these 90 were Europeans or Anglo-Indians and 978 Indians. The expenses of 575 persons certified to be indigent were borne by Government. Thirteen deaths from hydrophobia occurred after treatment—a rate of 1·22 per cent. Of these 6 only died later than 15 days after completing the treatment; all were Indians.

The construction of a 12-bed hospital for *kala-azar* patients was begun. 22 persons suffering from this disease were treated by intravenous injections of tartar emetic, with the result that no less than 16 were cured. In the two years 1917 and 1918 of 42 patients so treated 74 per cent. have been cured—a striking result.

For use in combating influenza, a mixed catarrhal vaccine was prepared and achieved great popularity, demands for it coming not only from all Assam, but from the Dooars, Bengal, and even from Burma. By the end of the year 19 litres had been issued.

Intravenous injections of quinine were used in the treatment of malaria with good results and encouraging experiments were made in the use of sodium morrhuate in tuberculosis. In the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, where the Institute is situated, anti-typhoid inoculations proved popular.

CHAPTER VII.

INSTRUCTION.

SECTION 1.—General System of Public Instruction.

[*See* General Administration Report for 1911-12, Part II, pages 121-123.]

SECTION 2.—Education.

[*See* General Report on Public Instruction in Assam for the year ending the 31st March 1919.]

General.

196. The total number of all classes of institutions, both public and private, increased from 4,883 to 4,950, but their enrolment declined from 230,085 to 224,715. Public institutions grew in number from 4,619 to 4,680, but the number of their pupils fell from 221,469 to 215,448, a decrease of 2·7 per cent. which was attributed to the influenza epidemic, general economic causes, earthquake and floods. Private institutions increased both in number and enrolment.

Expenditure increased from Rs. 25,82,270 to Rs. 26,83,149, and the income from fees continued to expand.

Collegiate Education.

197. On the 31st March 1919 there were 885 students on the rolls of the Arts Colleges—an increase of 74. The number of students who passed the Intermediate and the Degree examinations rose from 158 to 252, and from 69 to 75. Of the graduates, 12 obtained Honours, 2 in the first class. A fair number secured "Distinction." Assam continued in its place at the head of the provinces in regard to the success of its colleges at the various examinations of the Calcutta University.

Secondary Education.

198. The number of secondary schools for boys rose from 269 to 278. There were 36 High Schools, an increase of one, but their pupils declined in number from 13,406 to 13,071. The number of Middle English schools rose from 116 to 117, but their enrolment declined from 11,089 to 9,983. Middle Vernacular schools increased both in number and enrolment.

Primary Education.

199. Primary schools for boys increased from 3,881 to 3,924, but their enrolment fell from 167,022 to 161,804. Expenditure increased from Rs. 6,63,920 to Rs. 7,06,066. The capitation system in Primary schools came to an end.

Training of teachers.

200. The number of training institutions, 11, remained unchanged. The number of trained teachers rose from 2,761 out of 7,089 to 2,851 out of 7,247.

Law.

201. The 5 years' experimental period set for the Law College expired in July 1919 and was extended for an additional two years. The number of students at the close of the last year was 48, as against 55. The examination results were satisfactory.

The number of students in the pleadership class at Gauhati fell from 15 to 9.

Medical School.

202. Of the 143 students on the rolls of the Berry-White Medical School, 72 were residents of the Brahmaputra Valley, 51 of the Surma Valley, 5 were Khasis, 5 Bengalis, 4 Lushais, 2 Garos, 2 Manipuris, 1 Naga and 1 Miri. Out of 39 students in the 4th-year class, 29 passed the Final examination. Thirty-nine free studentships were awarded. The Compounder class attached to the school had on its roll 33 students. Seven appeared at the examination and 6 passed. The average annual cost to the public purse of educating each pupil was Rs. 192 against Rs. 184 in the preceding year.

Technical.

203. As usual, two Civil Engineering scholarships were awarded at Sibpur and 6 at the Dacca School of Engineering. The Sibsagar Local Board spent Rs. 816 on its Industrial school. The carpentry and weaving class attached to the Middle English School at Tipkai continued to secure a measure of success. The scheme for the training of Lushai youths in various crafts experimentally sanctioned in 1914 was extended for a further year from July 1918. The Telegraph Training Class at Gauhati had an enrolment of 10. Under the Williamson Apprenticeship scheme there were 15 apprentices.

Tols.

204. The number of Tols of all classes, public and private, decreased from 85 to 82 and the number of pupils from 1,519 to 1,452. In the first Tol examination 42 passed out of 117 candidates and in the second examination 13 out of 29.

Madrasas.

205. There were 4 private institutions teaching Arabic and Persian with an enrolment of 185 pupils. The number of Koran schools rose from 82 to 105. The enrolment of the Government Madrasa at Sylhet grew from 172 to 258.

INSTRUCTION.

Female Education.

206. Although at the close of the year the total number of girls at school had fallen from ·86 to ·85 per cent. of the population, and of those in public schools from 26,857 to 26,207, there was an increase of 5·5 per cent. in the number of students in the secondary stage of instruction. The decline in numbers occurred only in mixed schools. For the first time the number of girls reading in girls' schools exceeded that of girls reading in boys' schools.

European Education.

207. The number of schools was the same and the aggregate number of pupils expanded from 223 to 251.

Muhammadan Education.

208. The subjoined statement gives the Muhammadan enrolment for the past two years in the various classes of recognized schools :—

	1917-18.	1918-19.
High Schools	2,354	2,190
Middle English Schools	1,998	1,813
Middle Vernacular Schools	2,168	2,063
Primary Schools	42,441	40,025
Special Schools	903	1,006
Total	49,864	47,097

The number of Muhammadans at college rose from 126 to 133.

Hill tribes.

209. In all the Hill districts the number of pupils increased, in the Garo and Naga Hills in both Secondary and Primary schools, while in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills a slight decrease in the Secondary schools was more than counterbalanced by an increase of about 4 per cent. in the enrolment in Primary schools. In the Lushai Hills enrolment in Primary schools increased by about 12 per cent. and fell by about 58 per cent. in Secondary schools.

Tea-garden schools.

210. Tea-garden schools have declined both in number and in enrolment, the falling off being mainly in the Assam Valley which lost 22 schools and 509 pupils.

Discipline.

211. Discipline in schools and colleges was on the whole satisfactory.

SECTION 3.—Literature and the Press.

Publications registered.

212. The total number of publications received and catalogued was 32, a decrease of 9. They are classified below according to the subjects dealt with :—

Drama	1
General Text-books and Keys	8
Medicine	1
Miscellaneous	7
Periodicals	10
Poetry	2
Religion	3
Total	32

Of these, 12 were educational and 20 non-educational ; 29 were first editions and 3 new editions ; 5 were in Assamese, 21 in Bengali, 1 in Khasi, 1 in Assamese-English, 1 in Bengali-Sanskrit and 3 in English-Bengali-Sanskrit.

Newspaper.

213. One English, one Anglo-Vernacular, nine vernacular newspapers, and six periodicals were published. The tone of the press continued to be unobjectionable.

SECTION 4.—Scientific and Literary Societies.

Nil.

SECTION 5.—Arts and Sciences.

Nil.

CHAPTER VIII.

ARCHÆOLOGY.

[For the year ending the 31st March 1919.]

Archæology.

214. The most interesting of the monuments protected under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, VII of 1904, are the rock inscriptions at the foot of the Kamakhya Hill near Gauhati, the Dargah of Shah Jalal at Sylhet, the copper temple of the Deori Chutiyas near Sadiya where human sacrifices used to be offered annually, the Kachari ruins at Dimapur, the rock-cut temples at Maibong, the ruins of the Ahom palaces at Rangpur and Garhgaon, and the temples at Jaisagar and Gaurisagar in the Sibsagar district.

The tomb of Ghiyas-ud-din, the stone inscription inside the Poa Mecca Mosque at Hajo in the Kamrup district and the Kannachal hillock at Gauhati were declared to be protected monuments.

CHAPTER IX.

MISCELLANEOUS.

SECTION 1.—Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction.

[*See* General Administration Report for 1911-12, Part II, page 128.]

SECTION 2.—Ecclesiastical.

[For the year ending the 31st March 1919.]

215. The ecclesiastical establishment, maintained entirely or in part by this Administration, consists of the Chaplaincy of Shillong and the State-aided Chaplaincies of Silchar, Darrang, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur.

The Reverend C. G. Stokoe continued to be the Chaplain of Shillong till the 22nd January 1919. He was succeeded on the 14th February 1919 by the Reverend W. H. Drawbridge. During the interval Mr. H. Duncan, member of the Shillong Church Committee, held charge of the Chaplaincy. In Silchar the Reverend C. W. Dickinson took charge of the Chaplaincy in May 1918. The Chaplaincy of Sibsagar remained vacant.

SECTION 3.—Stationery.

[*See* Annual Report on the consumption of stationery in Assam for the year ending the 31st March 1919.]

216. Against an allotment of Rs. 52,302, stationery was issued to the value of Rs. 44,701 only, an increase of Rs. 3,047.

SECTION 4.—Printing.

[*See* Annual Report on the Assam Secretariat Press for the year ending the 31st March 1919.]

217. The cash receipts of the Secretariat Press increased from Rs. 2,926 to Rs. 3,287 and expenditure fell from Rs. 99,622 to Rs. 91,675. The actual amount paid to workmen exceeded the value of outturn by Rs. 571. To compensate them for the reduction in their earnings consequent on a general decrease of work in the Press, the employés were given an extra allowance by the Local Administration.

SECTION 5.—Veterinary Department.

[*See* Report of the Civil Veterinary Department of Assam for the year ending the 31st March 1919.]

Staff.

218. There were 20 stipendiaries of the province in the Bengal Veterinary College, of whom 6 were in the 1st, 5 in the 2nd and 9 in the third year class. 8 stipendiary students, having passed the final examination, were appointed Veterinary Assistants and this completed the Provincial cadre of 51 assistants. Arrangements were made for the post-graduate training of Veterinary Assistants.

Cattle disease.

219. Rinderpest, foot-and-mouth disease and hæmorrhagic septicæmia were the principal diseases. The number of deaths from contagious diseases reported fell from 60,710 to 20,819. Nearly 70 per cent. of deaths were reported from the Brahmaputra Valley. The number of outbreaks of contagious diseases reported fell from 698 to 210, and the percentage of deaths from rinderpest from 49 to 37. Of a total number of 20,394 animals inoculated 34 only died. The staff on tour treated 53,946 animals, an increase of 4,223.

General.

220. The cost of the department decreased from Rs. 85,252 to Rs. 78,567.

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